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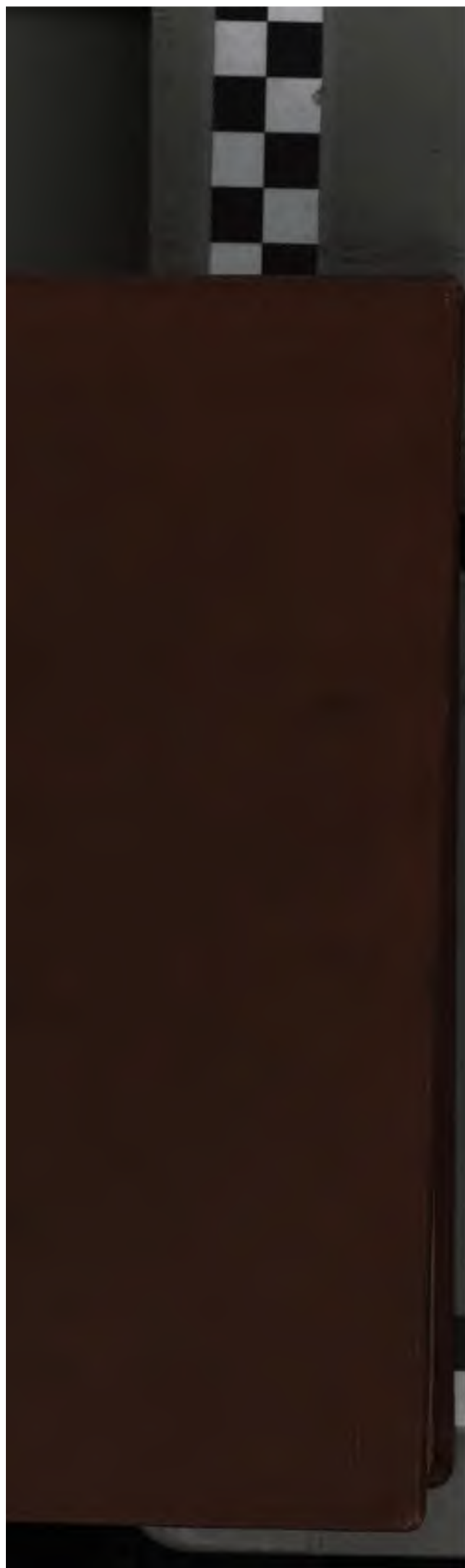
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IN TWENTY-SIX VOLUMES

Volume Eighteen



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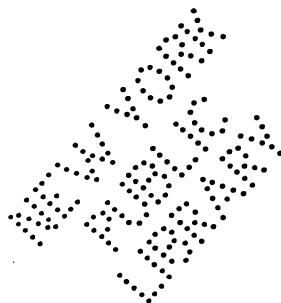
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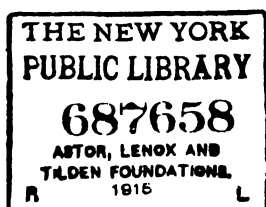
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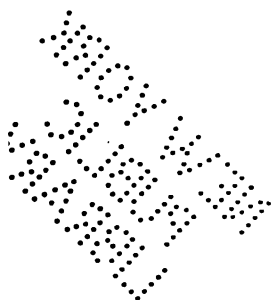
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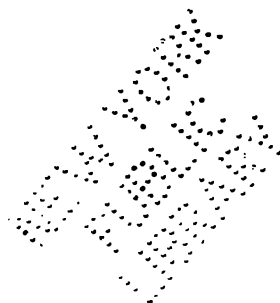
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"I never wrote a letter in my life which all the world are not welcome to read if they will."—FOES CLAVIGERA, Letter lix., 1876.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

My good Editor insists that this book must have an Author's Preface ; and insists further that it shall not contain compliments to him on the editorship. I must leave, therefore, any readers who care for the book, and comprehend the trouble that has been spent on it, to pay him their own compliments, as the successive service of his notes may call for them : but my obedience to his order, not in itself easy to me, doubles the difficulty I have in doing what nevertheless, I am resolved to do—pay, that is to say, several extremely fine compliments to myself, upon the quality of the text.

For of course I have read none of these letters since they were first printed : of half of them I had forgotten the contents, of some, the existence ; all come fresh to me ; and here in Rouen, where I thought nothing could possibly have kept me from drawing all I could of the remnants of the old town, I find myself, instead, lying in bed in the morning, reading these remnants of my old self—and that with much contentment and thankful applause.

For here are a series of letters ranging over a period of, broadly, forty years of my life ; most of them written hastily, and all in hours snatched from heavier work : and in the entire mass of them there is not a word I wish to change, not a statement I have to retract, and, I believe, few pieces of advice, which the reader will not find it for his good to act upon.

With which brief preface I am, for my own part, content ; but as it is one of an unusual tenor, and may be thought by some of my friends, and all my foes, more candid than graceful, I permit myself the apologetic egotism of enforcing one or two of the points in which I find these letters so well worth—their author's—reading.

In the building of a large book, there are always places where an indulged diffuseness weakens the fancy, and prolonged strain subdues the energy : when we have time to say all we wish, we usually wish to say more than enough ; and there are few subjects we can have the pride of exhausting, without wearying the listener. But all these letters were written with fully provoked zeal, under strict allowance of space and time : they contain the choicest and most needful things I could within narrow limits say, out of many contending to be said ; expressed with deliberate precision ; and recommended by the best art I had in illustration or emphasis. At the time of my life in which most of them were composed, I was fonder of metaphor, and more fertile in simile, than I am now ; and I employed both with franker trust in the reader's intelligence. Carefully chosen, they are always a powerful means of concentration ; and I could then dismiss in six words, " thistledown without seeds, and bubbles without color," forms of art on which I should now perhaps spend half a page of analytic vituperation ; and represent, with a pleasant accuracy which my best methods of outline and exposition could now no more achieve, the entire system of modern plutocratic policy, under the luckily remembered image of the Arabian bridegroom, bewitched with his heels uppermost.

It is to be remembered also that many of the subjects handled can be more conveniently treated controversially than directly ; the answer to a single question may be made clearer

than a statement which endeavors to anticipate many ; and the crystalline vigor of a truth is often best seen in the course of its serene collision with a trembling and dissolving fallacy. But there is a deeper reason than any such accidental ones for the quality of this book. Since the letters cost me, as aforesaid, much trouble ; since they interrupted me in pleasant work which was usually liable to take harm by interruption ; and since they were likely almost, in the degree of their force, to be refused by the editors of the adverse journals, I never was tempted into writing a word for the public press, unless concerning matters which I had much at heart. And the issue is, therefore, that the two following volumes contain very nearly the indices of everything I have deeply cared for during the last forty years ; while not a few of their political notices relate to events of more profound historical importance than any others that have occurred during the period they cover ; and it has not been an uneventful one.

Nor have the events been without gravity ; the greater, because they have all been inconclusive. Their true conclusions are perhaps nearer than any of us apprehend ; and the part I may be forced to take in them, though I am old,—perhaps I should rather say, *because* I am old,—will, as far as I can either judge or resolve, be not merely literary.

Whether I am spared to put into act anything here designed for my country's help, or am shielded by death from the sight of her remediless sorrow, I have already done for her as much service as she has will to receive, by laying before her facts vital to her existence, and unalterable by her power, in words of which not one has been warped by interest nor weakened by fear ; and which are as pure from selfish passion as if they were spoken already out of another world.

J. RUSKIN.

ROUEN, *St. Firmin's Day*, 1880.

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

SOME words are needed by way of a general note to the present volumes in explanation of the principles upon which they have been edited. It is, however, first due to the compiler of the Bibliography of Mr. Ruskin's writings,¹ to state in what measure this book has been prompted and assisted by his previous labors. Already acquainted with some few of the letters which Mr. Ruskin had addressed at various times to the different organs of the daily press, or which had indirectly found their way there, it was not until I came across the Bibliography that I was encouraged to complete and arrange a collection of these scattered portions of his thought. When I had done this, I ventured to submit the whole number of the letters to their author, and to ask him if, after taking two or three of them as examples of the rest, he would not consider the advisability of himself republishing, if not all, at least a selected few. In reply, he was good enough to put me in communication with his publisher, and to request me to edit any or all of the letters without further reference to him.

I have, therefore, to point out that except for that request, or rather sanction ; for the preface which he has promised to

¹ The Bibliography of Ruskin: a bibliographical list, arranged in chronological order, of the published writings of John Ruskin, M.A. (From 1834 to 1879.) By Richard Herne Shepherd.

add after my work upon the volumes is finished ; and for the title which it bears, Mr. Ruskin is in no way responsible for this edition of his letters. I knew, indeed, from the words of "Fors Clavigera" which are printed as a motto to the book, that I ran little risk of his disapproval in determining to print, not a selection, but the whole number of letters in question ; and I felt certain that the completeness of the collection would be considered a first essential by most of its readers, who are thus assured that the present volumes contain, with but two exceptions, every letter mentioned in the last edition of the bibliography, and some few more beside, which have been either printed or discovered since its publication.

The two exceptions are, first, the series of letters on the Lord's Prayer which appeared in the pages of the *Contemporary Review* last December ; and, secondly, some half-dozen upon "A Museum or Picture Gallery," printed in the *Art Journal* of last June and August. It seemed that both these sets of letters were really more akin to review articles cast in an epistolary form, and would thus find fitter place in a collection of such papers than in the present volumes ; and for the omission of the second set there was a still further reason in the fact that the series is not yet completed.¹ On the other hand, the recent circular on the proposed interference

¹ The letter out of which it took its rise, however, will be found on the 82d page of the first volume ; and with regard to it, and especially to the mention of Mr. Frith's picture in it, reference should be made to part of a further letter in the *Art Journal* of this month.

"I owe some apology, by the way, to Mr. Frith, for the way I spoke of his picture in my letter to the Leicester committee, not intended for publication, though I never write what I would not allow to be published, and was glad that they asked leave to print it." (*Art Journal*, August, 1880, where this sentence is further explained.)

with St. Mark's, Venice, is included in the first, and one or two other extraneous matters in the second volume, for reasons which their connection with the letters amongst which they are placed will make sufficiently clear.

The letters are reprinted word for word, and almost stop for stop, from the newspapers and other pages in which they first appeared. To ensure this accuracy was not an easy matter, and to it there are a few intentional exceptions. A few misprints have been corrected, such as that of "Fat Bard" for "Fort Bard" (vol. i. p. 147); and now and then the punctuation has been changed, as on the 256th page of the same volume, where a comma, placed in the original print of the letter between the words "visibly" and "owing," quite confused the sentence. To these slight alterations may be added others still less important, such as the commencement of a fresh paragraph, or the closing up of an existing one, to suit the composition of the type, which the number of notes rendered unusually tiresome. The title of a letter, too, is not always that provided it by the newspaper; in some cases it seemed well to rechristen, in others it was necessary to christen a letter, though the former has never been done where it was at all possible that the existing title (for which reference can always be made to the bibliography) was one given to it by Mr. Ruskin himself.

The classification of the letters is well enough shown by the tables of contents. The advantages of a topical over a chronological arrangement appeared beyond all doubt; whilst the addition to each volume of a chronological list of the letters contained in it, and the further addition to the second volume of a similar list of all the letters contained in the book, and of a full index, will, it is hoped, increase the usefulness of the work.

The beautiful engraving which forms the frontispiece of the first volume originally formed that of "The Oxford Museum." The plate was but little used in the apparently small edition of that book, and was thus found to be in excellent state for further use here. The woodcut of the chestnut spandril (vol. i. p. 141) is copied from one which may also be found in "The Oxford Museum." The facsimile of part of one of the letters is not quite satisfactory, the lines being somewhat thicker than they should be, but it answers its present purpose.

Lastly, the chief difficulty of editing these letters has been in regard to the notes, and has lain not so much in obtaining the necessary information as in deciding what use to make of it when obtained. The first point was, of course, to put the reader of the present volumes in possession of every fact which would have been common knowledge at the time when such and such a letter was written ; but beyond this there were various allusions, which might be thought to need explanation ; quotations, the exact reference to which might be convenient ; and so forth. Some notes, therefore, of this character have been also added ; whilst some few which were omitted, either intentionally or by accident, from the body of the work, may be found on reference to the index.¹

The effort to make the book complete has induced the notice of slight variations of text in one or two cases, especially in the reprint of the St. Mark's Circular. The space occupied by such notes is small, the interest which a few students take

¹ Some of the notes, it will be remarked, are in larger type than the rest ; these are Mr. Ruskin's original notes to the letters as first published, and are in fact part of them ; and they are so printed to distinguish them from the other notes, for which I am responsible.

in the facts they notice really great, and the appearance of pedantry to some readers is thus risked in order to meet the special wish of others. The same effort will account for the reappearance of one or two really unimportant letters in the Appendix to the second volume, which contains also some few letters the nature of which is rather personal than public.

I have asked Mr. Ruskin to state in his preface to the book the value he may set upon it in relation to his other and more connected work ; and for the rest, I have only to add that the editing of it has been the pleasant labor of my leisure for more than two years past, and to express my hope that these scattered arrows, some from the bow of "An Oxford Graduate," some from that of an Oxford Professor, may not have been vainly winged anew by

AN OXFORD PUPIL.

October, 1880.

NOTE.—In the second and third columns the bracketed words and figures are more or

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On Reflections in Water	[Denmark Hill]
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The Pre-Raphaelite Brethren, II.	Denmark Hill
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"The Awakening Conscience"	[Denmark Hill]
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Concerning Hydrostatics	Norwich
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Ribblesford Church	Brantwood, Coniston, Lancashire
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VOLUME ONE

LETTERS ON ART AND SCIENCE



ARROWS OF THE CHACE.

LETTERS ON ART.

I.—ART CRITICISM AND ART EDUCATION.

[From "The Weekly Chronicle," September 23, 1843.]

"MODERN PAINTERS"; A REPLY.

To the Editor of "The Weekly Chronicle."

SIR: I was much gratified by reading in your columns of the 15th¹ instant a piece of close, candid, and artistical criticism on my work entitled "Modern Painters." Serious and well-based criticism is at the present day so rare, and our periodicals are filled so universally with the splenetic jargon or meaningless praise of ignorance, that it is no small pleasure to an author to meet either with praise which he can view with patience, or censure which he can regard with respect. I seldom, therefore, read, and have never for an instant thought of noticing, the ordinary animadversions of the press; but the critique on "Modern Painters" in your pages is evidently the work of a man both of knowledge and feeling; and is at once so candid and so keen, so honest and so subtle, that I am desirous of offering a few remarks on the points on which it principally touches—they are of importance to art; and I feel convinced that the writer is desirous only of elucidating truth, not of upholding a favorite error. With respect first to Gas-

¹ It should be the 16th, the criticism having appeared in the preceding weekly issue.

par's painting of the "Sacrifice of Isaac." It is not on the faith of any *single* shadow that I have pronounced the time intended to be near noon¹—though the shadow of the two figures being very short, and cast *from* the spectator, is in itself conclusive. The whole system of chiaroscuro of the picture is lateral; and the light is expressly shown not to come from the distance by its breaking brightly on the bit of rock and waterfall on the left, from which the high copse wood altogether intercepts the rays proceeding from the horizon. There are multitudes of pictures by Gaspar with this same effect—leaving no doubt whatever on my mind that they are all manufactured by the same approved recipe, probably given him by Nicholas, but worked out by Gaspar with the clumsiness and vulgarity which are invariably attendant on the efforts of an inferior mind to realize the ideas of a greater. The Italian masters universally make the horizon the chief light of their picture, whether the effect intended be of noon or evening. Gaspar, to save himself the trouble of graduation, washes his sky half blue and half yellow, and separates the two colors by a line of cloud. In order to get his light conspicuous and clear, he washes the rest of his sky of a dark deep blue, without any thoughts about time of day or elevation of sun, or any such minutiae; finally, having frequently found the convenience of a black foreground, with a bit of light coming in round the corner, and probably having no conception of the possibility of painting a foreground on any other principle, he naturally falls into the usual method—blackens it all over, touches in a few rays of lateral light, and turns out a very respectable article; for in such language only should we express the completion of a picture painted throughout on conventional principles, without one reference to nature, and without one idea

¹ See *Modern Painters*, vol. i. p. 229 (Pt. II. § 2, cap. 2, § 5). "Again, take any important group of trees, I do not care whose,—Claude's, Salvator's, or Poussin's,—with lateral light (that in the *Marriage of Isaac and Rebecca*, or Gaspar's *Sacrifice of Isaac*, for instance); can it be supposed that those murky browns and melancholy greens are representative of the tints of leaves under full noonday sun?" The picture in question is, it need hardly be said, in the National Gallery (No. 31).

of the painter's own. With respect to Salvator's "Mercury and the Woodman,"¹ your critic has not allowed for the effect of time on its blues. They are now, indeed, sobered and brought down, as is every other color in the picture, until it is scarcely possible to distinguish any of the details in its darker parts; but they *have been* pure and clean, and the mountain is absolutely the same color as the open part of the sky. When I say it is "in full light," I do not mean that it is the highest light of the picture (for no distant mountain *can* be so, when compared with bright earth or white clouds), but that no accidental shadow is cast upon it; that it is under open sky, and so illumined that there must necessarily be a difference in hue between its light and dark sides, at which Salvator has not even hinted.

Again, with respect to the question of focal distances,² your critic, in common with many very clever people to whom I have spoken on the subject, has confused the obscurity of objects which are *laterally* out of the focal range, with that of objects which are *directly* out of the focal distance. If all objects in a landscape were in the same plane, they should be represented on the plane of the canvas with equal distinctness,

¹ See *Modern Painters*, vol. i., pp. 227-28 (Pt. II. § ii., cap. 2, § 4). The critic of the *Chronicle* had written that the rocky mountains in this picture "are *not* sky-blue, neither are they near enough for detail of crag to be seen, neither are they in full light, but are quite as indistinct as they would be in nature, and just the color." The picture is No. 84 in the National Gallery.

² See *Modern Painters*, vol. i. pp. 260-61 (Pt. II. § ii. cap. 4, § 6). "Turner introduced a new era in landscape art, by showing that the foreground might be sunk for the distance, and that it was possible to express immediate proximity to the spectator, without giving anything like completeness to the forms of the near objects. This, observe, is not done by sturred or soft lines (always the sign of vice in art), but by a decisive imperfection, a firm but partial assertion of form, which the eye feels indeed to be close home to it, and yet cannot rest upon, nor cling to, nor entirely understand, and from which it is driven away of necessity to those parts of distance on which it is intended to repose." To this the critic of the *Chronicle* had objected, attempting to show that it would result in Nature being "represented with just half the quantity of light and color that she possesses."

because the eye has no greater lateral range on the canvas than in the landscape, and can only command a point in each. But this point in the landscape may present an intersection of lines belonging to different distances—as when a branch of a tree, or tuft of grass, cuts against the horizon: and yet these different distances cannot be discerned together: we lose one if we look at the other, so that no painful intersection of lines is ever felt. But on the canvas, as the lines of foreground and of distance are on the *same* plane, they *will* be seen together whenever they intersect, painfully and distinctly; and, therefore, unless we make one series, whether near or distant, obscure and indefinite, we shall always represent as visible at once that which the eye can only perceive by two separate acts of seeing. Hold up your finger before this page, six inches from it. If you look at the edge of your finger, you cannot see the letters; if you look at the letters, you cannot see the edge of your finger, but as a confused, double, misty line. Hence in painting, you must either take for your subject the finger or the letters; you cannot paint both distinctly without violation of truth. It is of no consequence how quick the change of the eye may be; it is not one whit quicker than its change from one part of the horizon to another, nor are the two intersecting distances more visible at the same time than two opposite portions of a landscape to which it passes in succession. Whenever, therefore, in a landscape, we look from the foreground to the distance, the foreground is subjected to *two* degrees of indistinctness: the first, that of an object *laterally* out of the focus of the eye; and the *second*, that of an object *directly* out of the focus of the eye; being too near to be seen with the focus adapted to the distance. In the picture, when we look from the foreground to the distance, the foreground is subjected only to *one* degree of indistinctness, that of being out of the lateral range; for as both the painting of the distance and of the foreground are on the same plane, they are seen together with the same focus. Hence we must supply the *second* degree of indistinctness by slurring with the brush, or we shall have a severe and painful intersection of near and distant lines, impossible in

nature. Finally, a very false principle is implied by part of what is advanced by your critic—which has led to infinite error in art, and should therefore be instantly combated whenever it were hinted—that the ideal is different from the true. It is, on the contrary, only the perfection of truth. The Apollo is not a *false* representation of man, but the most perfect representation of all that is constant and essential in man—free from the accidents and evils which corrupt the truth of his nature.¹ Supposing we are describing to a naturalist some animal he does not know, and we tell him we saw one with a hump on its back, and another with strange bends in its legs, and another with a long tail, and another with no tail, he will ask us directly, But what is its *true* form, what is its *real* form? This truth, this reality, which he requires of us, is the *ideal* form, that which is hinted at by all the individuals—aimed at, but not arrived at. But never let it be said that, when a painter is defying the principles of nature at every roll of his brush, as I have shown that Gaspar does, when, instead of working out the essential characters of specific form, and raising those to their highest degree of nobility and beauty, he is casting all character aside, and carrying out imperfection and accident; never let it be said, in excuse for such degradation of nature, that it is done in pursuit of the ideal. As well might this be said in defence of the promising sketch of the human form pasted on the wainscot behind the hope of the family—artist and musician of equal power—in the “Blind Fiddler.”² Ideal beauty is the generalization of

¹ The passage in the Chronicle ran thus: “The Apollo is but an ideal of the human form; no figure ever moulded of flesh and blood was like it.” With the objection to this criticism we may compare *Modern Painters* (vol. i., where the ideal is defined as “the utmost degree of beauty of which the species is capable.” See also vol. ii.: “The perfect *idea* of the form and condition in which all the properties of the species are fully developed is called the Ideal of the species;” and “That unfortunate distinctness between Idealism and Realism which leads most people to imagine that the Ideal is opposed to the Real, and therefore false.”

² This picture of Sir David Wilkie’s was presented to the National Gallery (No. 99) by Sir George Beaumont, in 1826.

consummate knowledge, the concentration of perfect truth—not the abortive vision of ignorance in its study. Nor was there ever yet one conception of the human mind beautiful, but as it was based on truth. Whenever we leave nature, we fall immeasurably beneath her. So, again, I find fault with the “ropy wreath” of Gaspar,¹ not because he chose massy cloud instead of light cloud; but because he has drawn his massy cloud *falsely*, making it look tough and powerless, like a chain of Bologna sausages, instead of gifting it with the frangible and elastic vastness of nature’s mountain vapor.

Finally, Sir, why must it be only “when he is gone from us”² that the power of our greatest English landscape painter is to be acknowledged? It cannot, indeed, be fully understood until the current of years has swept away the minor lights which stand around it, and left it burning alone; but at least the scoff and the sneer might be lashed into silence, if those only did their duty by whom it is already perceived. And let us not think that our unworthiness has no effect on the work of the master. I could be patient if I thought that *no* effect was wrought on his noble mind by the cry of the populace; but, scorn it as he may, and does, it is yet impossible for any human mind to hold on its course, with the same energy and life, through the oppression of a perpetual hissing, as when it is cheered on by the quick sympathy of its fellow-men. It is not in art as in matters of political duty, where the path is clear and the end visible. The springs of feeling may be oppressed or sealed by the want of an answer in other bosoms, though the sense of principle cannot be blunted except by the individual’s *own* error; and though the knowledge of what is right, and the love of what is beautiful, may

¹ The bank of cloud in the “Sacrifice of Isaac” is spoken of in *Modern Painters* (vol. i., p. 304, Pt. II., § iii., cap. 3, § 7), as “a ropy, tough-looking wreath.” On this the reviewer commented.

² “We agree,” wrote the Chronicle, “with the writer in almost every word he says about this great artist; and we have no doubt that, when he is gone from among us, his memory will receive the honor due to his living genius.” See also the postscript to the first volume of *Modern Painters*, written in June, 1851.

still support our great painter through the languor of age—and Heaven grant it may for years to come—yet we cannot hope that he will ever cast his spirit upon the canvas with the same freedom and fire as if he felt that the voice of its inspiration was waited for among men, and dwelt upon with devotion. Once, in ruder times, the work of a great painter * was waited for through days at his door, and attended to its place of deposition by the enthusiasm of a hundred cities; and painting rose from that time, a rainbow upon the Seven Hills, and on the cypressed heights of Fiesole, guiding them and lighting them forever, even in the stillness of their decay. How can we hope that England will ever win for herself such a crown, while the works of her highest intellects are set for the pointing of the finger and the sarcasm of the tongue, and the sole reward for the deep, earnest, holy labor of a devoted life, is the weight of stone upon the trampled grave, where

* Cimabue. The quarter of the town is yet named, from the rejoicing of that day, Borgo Allegri.' (*Original note to the letter : see editor's preface.*)

* The picture thus honored was that of the Virgin, painted for the Church of Santa Maria Novella, where it now hangs in the Rucellai Chapel. "This work was an object of so much admiration to the people, . . . that it was carried in solemn procession, with the sound of trumpets and other festal demonstrations, from the house of Cimabue to the church, he himself being highly rewarded and honored for it. It is further reported, and may be read in certain records of old painters, that whilst Cimabue was painting this picture in a garden near the gate of San Pietro, King Charles the Elder, of Anjou, passed through Florence, and the authorities of the city, among other marks of respect, conducted him to see the picture of Cimabue. When this work was shown to the king, it had not before been seen by any one; wherefore all the men and women of Florence hastened in great crowds to admire it, making all possible demonstrations of delight. The inhabitants of the neighborhood, rejoicing in this occurrence, ever afterwards called that place Borgo Allegri; and this name it has since retained, although in process of time it became enclosed within the walls of the city—Vasari, *Lives of Painters*. Bohn's edition. London, 1850. Vol. i. p. 41. This well-known anecdote may also be found in Jameson's *Early Italian Painters*, p. 12.

the vain and idle crowd will come to wonder how the brushes are mimicked in the marble above the dust of him who wielded them in vain?

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,
THE AUTHOR OF "MODERN PAINTERS."

[From the "Artist and Amateur's Magazine" (edited by E. V. Rippingille), January, 1843, pp. 280-287.]

ART CRITICISM.

To the Editor of the "Artist and Amateur's Magazine."

SIR—Anticipating, with much interest, your reply to the candid and earnest inquiries of your unknown correspondent, Matilda Y.,¹ I am led to hope that you will allow me to have some share with you in the pleasant task of confirming an honest mind in the truth. Subject always to your animadversion and correction, so far as I may seem to you to be led astray by my peculiar love for the works of the artist to whom her letter refers, I yet trust that in most of the remarks I have to make on the points which have perplexed her, I shall be expressing not only your own opinions, but those of every other accomplished artist who is really acquainted—and which of our English masters is not?—with the noble system of

¹ This letter was written in reply to one signed "Matilda Y.," which had been printed in the *Artist and Amateur's Magazine*, p. 265, December, 1843, and which related to the opposite opinions held by different critics of the works of Turner, which were praised by some as "beautiful and profoundly truthful representations of nature," whilst others declared them to be "executed without end, aim, or principle." "May not these contradictions," wrote the correspondent, in the passage alluded to by Mr. Ruskin, "be in a great measure the result of extreme ignorance of art in the great mass of those persons who take upon themselves the office of critics and reviewers? Can any one be a judge of art whose judgment is not founded on an accurate knowledge of nature? It is scarcely possible that a mere knowledge of pictures, however extensive, can qualify a man for the arduous and responsible duties of public criticism of art."

poetry and philosophy which has been put forth on canvas, during the last forty years, by the great painter who has presented us with the almost unparalleled example of a man winning for himself the unanimous plaudits of his generation and time, and then casting them away like dust, that he may build his monument—*ære perennius*.

Your correspondent herself, in saying that mere knowledge of *pictures* cannot qualify a man for the office of a critic, has touched the first source of the schisms of the present, and of all time, in questions of pictorial merit. We are overwhelmed with a tribe of critics who are fully imbued with every kind of knowledge which is useful to the picture-dealer, but with none that is important to the artist. They know where a picture *has* been retouched, but not where it *ought* to have been; they know if it has been injured, but not if the injury is to be regretted. They are unquestionable authorities in all matters relating to the panel or the canvas, to the varnish or the vehicle, while they remain in entire ignorance of that which the vehicle conveys. They are well acquainted with the technical qualities of every master's touch; and when their discrimination fails, plume themselves on indisputable tradition, and point triumphantly to the documents of pictorial genealogy. But they never go *quite* far enough back; they stop *one* step short of the real original; they reach the human one, but never the Divine. Whatever, under the present system of study, the connoisseur of the gallery may learn or know, there is one thing he does *not* know—and that is nature. It is a pitiable thing to hear a man like Dr. Waagen,¹ about to set

¹ Gustav Friedrich Waagen, Director of the Berlin Gallery from 1832 until his death in 1868. He was the author of various works on art, amongst them one entitled *Works of Art and Artists in England* (London, 1838), which is that alluded to here. The passage quoted concludes a description of his "first attempt to navigate the watery paths," in a voyage from Hamburg to the London Docks (vol. i. p. 13). His criticism of Turner may be found in the same work (vol. ii. p. 80), where commenting on Turner's "Fishermen endeavoring to put their fish on board," then, as now, in the gallery of Bridgewater House (No. 169), and which was painted as a rival to the great sea-storm of Vandevelde, he writes, that "in the truth of clouds and waves" . . . it is inferior

the seal of his approbation, or the brand of his reprobation, on all the pictures in our island, expressing his insipid astonishment on his first acquaintance with the sea. "For the *first* time I understood the truth of their pictures (Backhuysen's and Van de Velde's), and the refined art with which, by intervening dashes of sunshine, near or at a distance, and *ships to animate the scene*, they produce such a charming variety on the surface of the sea." For the first time!—and yet this gallery-bred judge, this discriminator of colored shreds and canvas patches, who has no idea how ships animate the sea, until—charged with the fates of the Royal Academy—he ventures his invaluable person from Rotterdam to Greenwich, will walk up to the work of a man whose brow is hard with the spray of a hundred storms, and characterize it as "wanting in truth of clouds and waves"! Alas for Art, while such judges sit enthroned on their apathy to the beautiful, and their ignorance of the true, and with a canopy of canvas between them and the sky, and a wall of tradition, which may not be broken through, concealing from them the horizon, hurl their darkened verdicts against the works of men, whose night and noon have been wet with the dew of heaven—dwelling on the deep sea, or wandering among the solitary places of the earth, until they have "made the mountains, waves, and skies a part of them and of their souls."

to that picture, compared with which "it appears like a successful piece of scene-painting. The great crowd of amateurs, who ask nothing more of the art, will always far prefer Turner's picture." Dr. Waagen revised and re-edited his book in a second, entitled, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain* (1854), in which these passages are repeated with slight verbal alterations (vol. i. p. 3, vol. ii. p. 53). In this work he acknowledges his ignorance of Turner at the time the first was written, and gives a high estimate of his genius. "Buildings," he writes, "he treats with peculiar felicity, while *the sea* in its most varied aspects is *equally subservient to his magic brush*"!! He adds, that but for one deficiency, the want of a sound technical basis, he "should not hesitate to recognize Turner as the greatest landscape painter of all time"! With regard, however, to the above-named picture, it may be remembered that Mr. Ruskin has himself instanced it as one of the marine pictures which Turner spoiled by imitation of Vanderveelde (Pre-Raphaelitism, p. 45).

When information so narrow is yet the whole stock in trade of the highest authorities of the day, what are we to expect from the lowest? Dr. Waagen is a most favorable specimen of the tribe of critics; a man, we may suppose, impartial, above all national or party prejudice, and intimately acquainted with that half of his subject (the technical half) which is all we can reasonably expect to be known by one who has been trained in the painting-room instead of in the fields. No authority is more incontrovertible in all questions of the genuineness of old pictures. He has at least the merit—not common among those who talk most of the old masters—of knowing what he *does* admire, and will not fall into the same raptures before an execrable copy as before the original. If, then, we find a man of this real judgment in those matters to which his attention has been directed, entirely incapable, owing to his ignorance of nature, of estimating a modern picture, what can we hope from those lower critics who are unacquainted even with those technical characters which they have opportunities of learning? What, for instance, are we to anticipate from the sapient lucubrations of the critic—for some years back the disgrace of the pages of “Blackwood”—who in one breath displays his knowledge of nature, by styling a painting of a furze bush in the bed of a mountain torrent a specimen of the “high pastoral,” and in the next his knowledge of Art, by informing us that Mr. Lee “reminds him of Gainsborough’s best manner, but is inferior to him in composition”!¹ We do not mean to say anything against Mr. Lee; but can we forbear to smile at the hopeless innocence of the man’s novitiate, who could be reminded by them of landscapes powerful enough in color to take their place beside those of Rembrandt or Rubens? A little attention will soon convince your correspondent of the utter futility or falsehood of the ordinary critiques of the press; and there could, I believe, even at present be little doubt in her mind as to the fitting answer to the question, whether we are to take the opinion of the accom-

¹ See the Preface to the second edition of *Modern Painters* (vol. i. p. xix, etc.) Frederick Richard Lee, B.A., died in June, 1879.

plished artist or of the common newsmonger, were it not for a misgiving which, be she conscious of it or not, is probably floating in her mind—whether that can really be *great* Art which has no influence whatsoever on the multitude, and is appreciable only by the initiated few. And this is the real question of difficulty. It is easy to prove that such and such a critic is wrong ; but not so, to prove that what everybody dislikes is right. It is fitting to pay respect to Sir Augustus Callcott, but is it so to take his word against all the world ?

This inquiry requires to be followed with peculiar caution ; for by setting at defiance the judgment of the public, we in some sort may appear to justify that host of petty scribblers, and contemptible painters, who in all time have used the same plea in defence of their rejected works, and have received in consequence merciless chastisement from contemporary and powerful authors or painters, whose reputation was as universal as it was just. “*Mes ouvrages,*” said Rubens to his challenger, Abraham Janssens, “*ont été exposés en Italie, et en Espagne, sans que j’aie reçu la nouvelle de leur condamnation. Vous n’avez qu’à soumettre les votres à la même épreuve.*”¹ “*Je défie,*” says Boileau, “*tous les amateurs les plus mécontents du public, de me citer un bon livre que le public ait jamais rebuté, à moins qu’ils ne mettent en ce rang leur écrits, de la bonté desquels eux seuls sont persuadés.*”

Now the fact is, that the whole difficulty of the question is caused by the ambiguity of this word—the “public.” Whom does it include ? People continually forget that there is a *separate* public for every picture, and for every book. Appealed to with reference to any particular work, the public is that class of persons who possess the knowledge which it pre-

¹ Abraham Janssens, in his jealousy of Rubens, proposed to him that they should each paint a picture, and submit the rival works to the decision of the public. Mr. Ruskin gives Rubens' reply, the tenor of which may be found in any life of the artist. See Hasselt's *Histoire de Rubens* (Brussels, 1840), p. 48, from which Mr. Ruskin quotes ; *Deacamps*, vol. i. p. 304 ; *Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting*, Bohn's octavo edition, p. 306.

supposes, and the faculties to which it is addressed. With reference to a new edition of Newton's *Principia*, the "public" means little more than the Royal Society. With reference to one of Wordsworth's poems, it means all who have hearts. With reference to one of Moore's, all who have passions. With reference to the works of Hogarth, it means those who have worldly knowledge—to the works of Giotto, those who have religious faith. Each work must be tested exclusively by the fiat of the *particular* public to whom it is addressed. We will listen to no comments on Newton from people who have no mathematical knowledge; to none on Wordsworth from those who have no hearts; to none on Giotto from those who have no religion. Therefore, when we have to form a judgment of any new work, the question "What do the public say to it?" is indeed of vital importance; but we must always inquire, first, who are *its* public? We must not submit a treatise on moral philosophy to a conclave of horse-jockeys, nor a work of deep artistical research to the writers for the Art Union.

The public, then, we repeat, when referred to with respect to a particular work, consist only of those who have knowledge of its subject, and are possessed of the faculties to which it is addressed.

If it fail of touching *these*, the work is a bad one; but it in no degree militates against it that it is rejected by those to whom it does not appeal. To whom, then, let us ask, and to *what* public do the works of Turner appeal? To those only we reply, who have profound and disciplined acquaintance with nature, ardent poetical feeling, and keen eye for color (a faculty far more rare than an ear for music). They are deeply-toned poems, intended for all who love poetry, but not for those who delight in mimicries of wine-glasses and nutshells. They are deep treatises on natural phenomena, intended for all who are acquainted with such phenomena, but not for those who, like the painter Barry, are amazed at finding the realities of the Alps grander than the imaginations of Salvator, and assert that they saw the moon from the Mont Cenis four times as big as usual, "from being so much nearer

to it"!* And they are studied melodies of exquisite color, intended for those who have perception of color; not for those who fancy that all trees are Prussian green. Then comes the question, Were the works of Turner *ever* rejected by any person possessing even partially these qualifications? We answer boldly, never. On the contrary, they are universally hailed by *this* public with an enthusiasm not undeserving in appearance—at least to those who are debarred from sharing in it, of its usual sobriquet—the Turner mania.

Is, then, the number of those who are acquainted with the truth of nature so limited? So it has been asserted by one who knew much both of Art and Nature, and both were glorious in his country.†

* This is a singular instance of the profound ignorance of landscape in which great and intellectual painters of the human form may remain; an ignorance, which commonly renders their remarks on landscape painting nugatory, if not false.¹

† Plato.—“*Hippias*. Men do not commonly say so.

Socrates. Who do not say so—those who know, or those who do not know?

Hippias. The multitude.

Socrates. Are then the multitude acquainted with truth?

Hippias. *Certainly not.*”

The answer is put into the mouth of the sophist; but put as an established fact, which he cannot possibly deny.²

¹ The amazement of the painter is underrated: “You will believe me much nearer heaven upon Mount Cenis than I was before, or shall probably be again for some time. We passed this mountain on Sunday last, and about seven in the morning were near the top of the road over it, on both sides of which the mountain rises to a very great height, yet so high were we in the valley between them that the moon, which was above the horizon of the mountains, appeared at least five times as big as usual, and much more distinctly marked than I ever saw it through some very good telescopes.”—Letter to Edmund Burke, dated Turin, Sept. 24, 1766. Works of James Barry, R.A., 2 vols., quarto (London, 1809), vol. i. p. 58. He died in 1806.

² Plato: *Hippias Major*, 284 E. Steph.

- “ III. Οὐ μέντοι εἰώθασιν ἄνθρωποι ὀνομάζειν οὕτως.
 ΣΩ. Πότερον, ὦ Ἱππια, οἱ εἰδότες ἢ οἱ μὴ εἰδότες;
 III. Οἱ πολλοί.
 ΣΩ. Εἰσὶ δ' οὗτοί οἱ εἰδότες τὰ ληθές, οἱ πολλοί;
 III. Οὐ δῆτα.”

HIPPIAS MAJOR.

Now, we are not inclined to go quite so far as this. There are many subjects with respect to which the multitude *are* cognizant of truth, or at least of *some* truth; and those subjects may be generally characterized as everything which materially concerns themselves or their interests. The public are acquainted with the nature of their own passions and the point of their own calamities—can laugh at the weakness they feel, and weep at the miseries they have experienced; but all the sagacity they possess, be it how great soever, will not enable them to judge of likeness to that which they have never seen, nor to acknowledge principles on which they have never reflected. Of a comedy or a drama, an epigram or a ballad, they are judges from whom there is no appeal; but not of the representation of facts which they have never examined, of beauties which they have never loved. It is not sufficient that the facts or the features of nature be around us, while they are not within us. We may walk day by day through grove and meadow, and scarcely know more concerning them than is known by bird and beast, that the one has shade for the head, and the other softness for the foot. It is not true that “the eye, it cannot choose but see,” unless we obey the following condition, and go forth “in a wise passiveness,”¹ free from that plague of our own hearts which brings the shadow of ourselves, and the tumult of our petty interests and impatient passions, across the light and calm of Nature. We do not sit at the feet of our mistress to listen to her teachings; but we seek her only to drag from her that which may suit our purpose, to see in her the confirmation of a theory, or find in her fuel for our pride. Nay, do we often go to her

¹ Wordsworth. Poems of Sentiment and Reflection. i. Expostulation and Reply.

even thus? Have we not rather cause to take to ourselves the full weight of Wordsworth's noble appeal—

“Vain pleasures of luxurious life!
 Forever with yourselves at strife,
 Through town and country, both deranged
 By affections interchanged,
 And all the perishable gauds
 That heaven-deserted man applauds.
 When will your hapless patrons learn
 To watch and ponder, to discern
 The freshness, the eternal youth
 Of admiration, sprung from truth,
 From beauty infinitely growing
 Upon a mind with love o'erflowing:
 To sound the depths of every art
 That seeks its wisdom through the heart?”¹

When *will* they learn it? Hardly, we fear, in this age of steam and iron, luxury and selfishness. We grow more and more artificial day by day, and see less and less worthiness in those pleasures which bring with them no morbid excitement, in that knowledge which affords us no opportunity of display. Your correspondent may rest assured that those who do not *care* for nature, who do not love her, *cannot* see her. A few of her phenomena lie on the surface; the nobler number lie deep, and are the reward of watching and of thought. The artist may choose *which* he will render: no human art can render both. If he paint the surface, he will catch the crowd; if he paint the depth, he will be admired only—but with how deep and fervent admiration, none but they who feel it can tell—by the thoughtful and observant few.

There are some admirable observations on this subject in your December number (“An Evening’s Gossip with a Painter”);

¹ Memorials of a Tour in Scotland. 1814. iii. Effusion.

² See the Artist and Amateur’s Magazine, p. 248. The article named was written in dialogue, and in the passage alluded to “*Palette*,” an artist, points out to his companion “*Chatworthy*,” who represents the general public, that “next to the highest authorities in Art are the pure, natural, untainted, highly educated, and intelligent *few*.” The argument is continued over some pages, but although the Magazine is not now readily accessible to the ordinary reader, it will not be thought necessary to go further into the discussion.

but there is one circumstance with respect to the works of Turner which yet further limits the number of their admirers. They are not prosaic statements of the phenomena of nature—they are statements of them under the influence of ardent feeling; they are, in a word, the most fervent and real poetry which the English nation is at present producing. Now not only is this proverbially an age in which poetry is little cared for; but even with those who have most love of it, and most need of it, it requires, especially if high and philosophical, an attuned, quiet, and exalted frame of mind for its enjoyment; and if dragged into the midst of the noisy interests of every-day life, may easily be made ridiculous or offensive. Wordsworth recited, by Mr. Wakley, in the House of Commons, in the middle of a financial debate, would sound, in all probability, very like Mr. Wakley's¹ own verses. Wordsworth, read in the stillness of a mountain hollow, has the force of the mountain waters. What would be the effect of a passage of Milton recited in the middle of a pantomime, or of a dreamy stanza of Shelley upon the Stock Exchange? Are we to judge of the nightingale by hearing it sing in broad daylight in Cheapside? For just such a judgment do we form of Turner by standing before his pictures in the Royal Academy. It is a strange thing that the public never seem to suspect that there may be a poetry in painting, to meet which, some preparation of sympathy, some harmony of circumstance, is required; and that it is just as impossible to see half a dozen great pictures as to read half a dozen great poems at the same time, if their tendencies or their tones of feeling be contrary or discordant. Let us imagine what would be the effect on the mind of any man of feeling, to whom an eager friend, desirous of impressing upon him the merit of different poets, should read successively, and without a pause, the following

¹ Mr. Thomas Wakley, at this time M.P. for Finsbury, and coroner for Middlesex. He was the founder of the *Lancet*, and took a deep interest in medicine, which he at one time practised. I do not find, however, that he published any volume of poems, though he may well have been the author, as the letter seems to imply, of some occasional verses. He died in 1862.

passages, in which lie something of the prevailing character of the works of six of our greatest modern artists :

LANDSEER.

" His hair, his size, his mouth, his lugs,
Show'd he was nane o' Scotland's dougs,
But whalpit some place far abroad
Whar sailors gang to fish for cod."¹

MARTIN.

" Far in the horizon to the north appear'd,
From skirt to skirt, a fiery region, stretched
In battailous aspect, and nearer view
Bristled with upright beams innumerable
Of rigid spears, and helmets throng'd, and shields
Various, with boastful argument portray'd."

WILKIE.

" The risin' moon began to glower
The distant Cumnock hills out owre ;
To count her horns, wi' a' my pow'r,
I set mysel' ;
But whether she had three or fowr,
I couldna tell."

EASTLAKE.

" And thou, who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet."

STANFIELD.

" Ye mariners of England,
Who guard our native seas,
Whose flag has braved a thousand years
The battle and the breeze."

TURNER.

" The point of one white star is quivering still,
Deep in the orange light of widening dawn,
Beyond the purple mountains. Through a chasm
Of wind-divided mist the darker lake
Reflects it, now it fades : it gleams again,

¹ The references to this and the five passages following are (1) Burns, *The Twa Dogs* ; (2) Milton, *Paradise Lost*, vi. 79 ; (3) Burns, *Death and Doctor Hornbook* ; (4) Byron, *Hebrew Melodies*, *Oh ! snatched away in beauty's bloom* ; (5) Campbell ; and (6) Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound*, Act. ii. sc. 1.

As the waves fall, and as the burning threads
 Of woven cloud unravel in pale air,
 'Tis lost ! and through yon peaks of cloud-like snow
 The roseate sunlight quivers. '

Precisely to such advantage as the above passages, so placed,¹ appear, are the works of any painter of mind seen in the Academy. None suffer more than Turner's, which are not only interfered with by the prosaic pictures around them, but neutralize each other. Two works of his, side by side, destroy each other to a dead certainty, for each is so vast, so complete, so demandant of every power, so sufficient for every desire of the mind, that it is utterly impossible for two to be comprehended together. Each must have the undivided intellect, and each is destroyed by the attraction of the other ; and it is the chief power and might of these pictures, that they are works for the closet and the heart—works to be dwelt upon separately and devotedly, and then chiefly when the mind is in its highest tone, and desirous of a beauty which may be food for its immortality. It is the very stamp and essence of the purest poetry, that it can only be so met and understood ; and that the clash of common interests, and the roar of the selfish world, must be hushed about the heart, before it can hear the still, small voice, wherein rests the power communicated from the Holiest.*

Can, then,—will be, if I mistake not, the final inquiry of

¹ It will be felt at once that the more serious and higher passages generally suffer most. But Stanfield, little as it may be thought, suffers grievously in the Academy, just as the fine passage from Campbell is ruined by its position between the perfect tenderness of Byron and Shelley. The more vulgar a picture is, the better it bears the Academy.

* Although it is in verse that the most consummate skill in composition is to be looked for, and all the artifices of language displayed, yet it is in verse only that we throw off the yoke of the world, and are, as it were, privileged to utter our deepest and holiest feelings. Poetry in this respect may be called the salt of the earth. We express in it, and receive in it, sentiments for which, were it not for this permitted medium, the usages of the world would neither allow utterance

your correspondent,—can, then, we ordinary mortals,—can I, who am not Sir Augustus Callcott, nor Sir Francis Chantrey, ever derive any pleasure from works of this lofty character? Heaven forbid, we reply, that it should be otherwise. *Nothing* more is necessary for the appreciation of them, than that which is necessary for the appreciation of any great writer—the quiet study of him with an humble heart. There are, indeed, technical qualities, difficulties overcome and principles developed, which are reserved for the enjoyment of the artist; but these do not add to the influence of the picture. On the contrary, we must break through its charm, before we can comprehend its means, and “murder to dissect.” The picture is intended, not for artists alone, but for all who love what it portrays; and so little doubt have we of the capacity of all to understand the works in question, that we have the most confident expectation, within the next fifty years, of seeing the name of Turner placed on the same impregnable height with that of Shakespeare.¹ Both have committed errors of taste

nor acceptance.”—*Southey's Colloquies*.² Such allowance is never made to the painter. In him, inspiration is called insanity—in him, the sacred fire, possession.

¹ “This Turner, of whom you have known so little while he was living among you, will one day take his place beside Shakespeare and Verulam, in the annals of the light of England.

“Yes: beside Shakespeare and Verulam, a third star in that central constellation, round which, in the astronomy of intellect, all other stars make their circuit. By Shakespeare, humanity was unsealed to you; by Verulam the *principles* of nature; and by Turner, her *aspect*. All these were sent to unlock one of the gates of light, and to unlock it for the first time. But of all the three, though not the greatest, Turner was the most unprecedented in his work. Bacon did what Aristotle had attempted; Shakespeare did perfectly what Æschylus did partially; but none before Turner had lifted the veil from the face of nature; the majesty of the hills and forests had received no interpretation, and the clouds passed unrecorded from the face of the heavens which they adorned, and of the earth to which they ministered.”—*Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, by John Ruskin; published 1854; pp. 180, 181.

² Sir Thomas More; or, *Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society*. Colloquy xiv. (vol. ii. p. 399, in Murray's edition, 1829).

and judgment. In both it is, or will be, heresy even to feel those errors, so entirely are they overbalanced by the gigantic powers of whose impetuosity they are the result. So soon as the public are convinced, by the maintained testimony of high authority, that Turner is worth understanding, they will try to understand him ; and if they try, they can. Nor are they, now, as is commonly thought, despised or defied by him. He has too much respect for them to endeavor to please them by falsehood. He will not win for himself a hearing by the betrayal of his message.

Finally, then, we would recommend your correspondent, first, to divest herself of every atom of lingering respect or regard for the common criticism of the press, and to hold fast by the authority of Callcott, Chantrey, Landseer, and Stanfield ; and this, not because we would have her *slavishly* subject to any authority but that of her own eyes and reason, but because we would not have her blown about with every wind of doctrine, before she has convinced her reason or learned to use her eyes. And if she can draw at all, let her make careful studies of any natural objects that may happen to come in her way,—sticks, leaves, or stones,—and of distant atmospheric effects on groups of objects ; not for the sake of the drawing itself, but for the sake of the powers of attention and accurate observation which thus only can be cultivated. And let her make the study, not thinking of this artist or of that ; not conjecturing what Harding would have done, or Stanfield, or Callcott, with her subject ; nor trying to draw in a bold style, or a free style, or any other style ; but drawing *all* she *sees*, as far as may be in her power, earnestly, faithfully, unselectingly ; and, which is perhaps the more difficult task of the two, *not* drawing what she does *not* see. Oh, if people did but know how many lines nature *suggests* without *showing*, what different art should we have ! And let her never be discouraged by ill success. She will seldom have gained more knowledge than when she most feels her failure. Let her use every opportunity of examining the works of Turner ; let her try to copy them, then try to copy some one else's, and observe which presents most of that kind of difficulty which she found in

copying nature. Let her, if possible, extend her acquaintance with wild natural scenery of every kind and character, endeavoring in each species of scenery to distinguish those features which are expressive and harmonious from those which are unaffecting or incongruous; and after a year or two of such discipline as this, let her judge for herself. No authority need then, or can then, be very influential with her. Her own pleasure in works of true greatness¹ will be too real, too instinctive, to be persuaded or laughed out of her. We bid her, therefore, heartily good-speed, with this final warning: Let her beware, in going to nature, of taking with her the commonplace dogmas or dicta of art. Let her not look for what is like Titian or like Claude, for composed form or arranged chiaroscuro; but believe that everything which God has made is beautiful, and that everything which nature teaches is true. Let her beware, above everything, of that wicked pride which makes man think he can dignify God's glorious creations, or exalt the majesty of his universe. Let her be humble, we repeat, and earnest. Truth was never sealed, if so sought. And once more we bid her good-speed in the words of our poet-moralist;

“ Enough of Science and of Art :
Seal up these barren leaves ;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches, and receives.”²

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient humble servant,
THE AUTHOR OF “ MODERN PAINTERS.”

¹ We have not sufficiently expressed our concurrence in the opinion of her friend, that Turner's modern works are his greatest. His early ones are nothing but amplifications of what others have done, or hard studies of every-day truth. His later works no one but himself could have conceived: they are the result of the most exalted imagination, acting with the knowledge acquired by *means* of his former works.

² Wordsworth. *Poems of Sentiment and Reflection*. ii. *The Tables Turned* (1798), being the companion poem to that quoted *ante*, p. 32. The second line should read, “Close up these barren leaves.”

[From "Some Account of the Origin and Objects of the New Oxford Examinations for the Title of Associate in Arts and Certificates," by T. D. Acland, late Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford,¹ 1858, pp. 54-60.]

THE ARTS AS A BRANCH OF EDUCATION.

PENRITH, Sept. 25, 1857.

MY DEAR SIR: I have just received your most interesting letter, and will try to answer as shortly as I can, saying nothing of what I feel, and what you must well know I should feel, respecting the difficulty of the questions and their importance; except only this, that I should not have had the boldness to answer your letter by return of post, unless, in consequence of conversations on this subject with Mr. Acland and Dr. Acland, two months ago, I had been lately thinking of it more than of any other.¹

Your questions fall under two heads: (1) The range which an art examination can take; (2) The connection in which it should be placed with other examinations.

I think the art examination should have three objects:

(1) To put the happiness and knowledge which the study of art conveys within the conception of the youth, so that he may in after-life pursue them, if he has the gift.

¹ This work related to University co-operation with schemes for middle-class education, and included letters from various authorities, amongst others one from Mr. Hullah on Music. The present letter was addressed to the Rev. F. Temple (now Bishop of Exeter), and was written in reply to a statement of certain points in debate between him and Mr. (now Sir Thomas) Acland. In forwarding it to his opponent, Mr. Temple wrote as follows: "The liberal arts are supreme over their sciences. Instead of the rules being despotic, the great artist usually proves his greatness by rightly setting aside rules; and the great critic is he who, while he knows the rule, can appreciate the 'law within the law' which overrides the rule. In no other way does Ruskin so fully show his greatness in criticism as in that fine inconsistency for which he has been so often attacked by men who do not see the real consistency that lies beneath."

² In the following year Mr. Ruskin wrote a paper for the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, on Education in Art (*Transactions*, 1858, pp. 311-316), now reprinted in the eleventh volume of Mr. Ruskin's works, *A Joy for Ever*, pages 119-126. To this paper the reader of the present letter is referred.

(2) To enforce, as far as possible, such knowledge of art among those who are likely to become its patrons, or the guardians of its works, as may enable them usefully to fulfil those duties.

(3) To distinguish pre-eminent gift for the production of works of art, so as to get hold of all the good artistical faculty born in the country, and leave no Giotto lost among hill-shepherds.¹

In order to accomplish the first object, I think that, according to Mr. Acland's proposal, preliminary knowledge of drawing and music should be asked for, in connection with writing and arithmetic; but not, in the preliminary examination, made to count towards distinction in other schools. I think drawing is a necessary means of the expression of certain facts of form and means of acquaintance with them, as arithmetic is the means of acquaintance with facts of number. I think the facts which an elementary knowledge of drawing enables a man to observe and note are often of as much importance to him as those which he can describe in words or calculate in numbers. And I think the cases in which mental deficiency would prevent the acquirement of a serviceable power of drawing would be found as rare as those in which no progress could be made in arithmetic. I would not desire this elementary knowledge to extend far, but the limits which I would propose are not here in question. While I feel the force of all the admirable observations of Mr. Hullah on the use of the study of music, I imagine that the cases of physical incapacity of distinguishing sounds would be too frequent to admit of musical knowledge being made a *requirement*; I would *ask* for it, in Mr. Acland's sense; but the drawing might, I think, be required, as arithmetic would be.

¹ "Giotto passed the first ten years of his life, a shepherd-boy, among these hills (of Fiésole); was found by Cimabue, near his native village, drawing one of his sheep upon a smooth stone; was yielded up by his father, 'a simple person, a laborer of the earth,' to the guardianship of the painter, who, by his own work, had already made the streets of Florence ring with joy; attended him to Florence, and became his disciple."—Giotto and his Works in Padua, by John Ruskin, 1854, p. 12.

2. To accomplish the second object is the main difficulty. Touching which I venture positively to state :

First. That sound criticism of art is impossible to young men, for it consists principally, and in a far more exclusive sense than has yet been felt, in the recognition of the facts represented by the art. A great artist represents many and abstruse facts ; it is necessary, in order to judge of his works, that all those facts should be experimentally (not by hearsay) known to the observer ; whose recognition of them constitutes his approving judgment. A young man *cannot* know them.

Criticism of art by young men must, therefore, consist either in the more or less apt retailing and application of received opinions, or in a more or less immediate and dextrous use of the knowledge they already possess, so as to be able to assert of given works of art that they are true up to a certain point ; the probability being then that they are true farther than the young man sees.

The first kind of criticism is, in general, useless, if not harmful ; the second is that which the youths will employ who are capable of becoming critics in after years.

Secondly. All criticism of art, at whatever period of life, must be partial ; warped more or less by the feelings of the person endeavoring to judge. Certain merits of art (as energy, for instance) are pleasant only to certain temperaments ; and certain tendencies of art (as, for instance, to religious sentiment) can only be sympathized with by one order of minds. It is almost impossible to conceive of any mode of examination which would set the students on anything like equitable footing in such respects ; but their sensibility to art may be generally tested.

Thirdly. The history of art, or the study, in your accurate words, "*about* the subject," is in no wise directly connected with the studies which promote or detect art-capacity or art-judgment. It is quite possible to acquire the most extensive and useful knowledge of the forms of art existing in different ages, and among different nations, without thereby acquiring any power whatsoever of determining respecting any of them

(much less respecting a modern work of art) whether it is good or bad.

These three facts being so, we had perhaps best consider, first, what direction the art studies of the youth should take, as that will at once regulate the mode of examination.

First. He should be encouraged to carry forward the practical power of drawing he has acquired in the elementary school. This should be done chiefly by using that power as a help in other work : precision of touch should be cultivated by map-drawing in his geography class ; taste in form by flower-drawing in the botanical schools ; and bone and limb drawing in the physiological schools. His art, kept thus to practical service, will always be right as far as it goes ; there will be no affectation or shallowness in it. The work of the drawing-master would be at first little more than the exhibition of the best means and enforcement of the most perfect results in the collateral studies of form.

Secondly. His critical power should be developed by the presence around him of the best models, *into the excellence of which his knowledge permits him to enter*. He should be encouraged, above all things, to form and express judgment of his own ; not as if his judgment were of any importance as related to the excellence of the thing, but that both his master and he may know precisely in what state his mind is. He should be told of an Albert Dürer engraving, "That is good, whether you like it or not ; but be sure to determine *whether* you do or do not, and why." All formal expressions of reasons for opinion, such as a boy could catch up and repeat, should be withheld like poison ; and all models which are too good for him should be kept out of his way. Contemplation of works of art without understanding them jades the faculties and enslaves the intelligence. A Rembrandt etching is a better example to a boy than a finished Titian, and a cast from a leaf than one of the Elgin marbles.

Thirdly. I would no more involve the art-schools in the study of the history of art than surgical schools in that of the history of surgery. But a general idea of the influence of art on the human mind ought to be given by the study of history

in the historical schools ; the effect of a picture, and power of a painter, being examined just as carefully (in relation to its extent) as the effect of a battle and the power of a general. History, in its full sense, involves subordinate knowledge of all that influences the acts of mankind ; it has hardly yet been written at all, owing to the want of such subordinate knowledge in the historians ; it has been confined either to the relation of events by eye-witnesses (the only valuable form of it), or the more or less ingenious collation of such relations. And it is especially desirable to give history a more archæological range at this period, so that the class of manufactures produced by a city at a given date should be made of more importance in the student's mind than the humors of the factions that governed, or details of the accidents that preserved it, because every day renders the destruction of historical memorials more complete in Europe owing to the total want of interest in them felt by its upper and middle classes.

Fourthly. Where the faculty for art was special, it ought to be carried forward to the study of design, first in practical application to manufacture, then in higher branches of composition. The general principles of the application of art to manufacture should be explained in all cases, whether of special or limited faculty. Under this head we may at once get rid of the third question stated in the first page—how to detect special gift. The power of drawing from a given form accurately would not be enough to prove this : the additional power of design, with that of eye for color, which could be tested in the class concerned with manufacture, would justify the master in advising and encouraging the youth to undertake special pursuit of art as an object of life.

It seems easy, on the supposition of such a course of study, to conceive a mode of examination which would test relative excellence. I cannot suggest the kind of questions which ought to be put to the class occupied with sculpture ; but in my own business of painting, I should put, in general, such tasks and questions as these :

(1) "Sketch such and such an object" (given a difficult one, as a bird, complicated piece of drapery, or foliage)

"as completely as you can in light and shade in half an hour."

(2) "Finish such and such a portion of it" (given a very small portion) "as perfectly as you can, irrespective of time."

(3) "Sketch it in color in half an hour."

(4) "Design an ornament for a given place and purpose."

(5) "Sketch a picture of a given historical event in pen and ink."

(6) "Sketch it in colors."

(7) "Name the picture you were most interested in in the Royal Academy Exhibition of this year. State in writing what you suppose to be its principal merits—faults—the reasons of the *interest* you took in it."

I think it is only the fourth of these questions which would admit of much change; and the seventh in the name of the exhibition; the question being asked, without previous knowledge by the students, respecting some *one* of four or five given exhibitions which should be visited before the examination.

This being my general notion of what an Art-Examination should be, the second great question remains of the division of schools and connection of studies.

Now I have not yet considered—I have not, indeed, knowledge enough to enable me to consider—what the practical convenience or results of given arrangements would be. But the logical and harmonious arrangement is surely a simple one; and it seems to me as if it would not be inconvenient, namely (requiring elementary drawing with arithmetic in the preliminary Examination), that there should then be three advanced schools:

- a. The School of Literature (occupied chiefly in the study of human emotion and history).
- b. The School of Science (occupied chiefly in the study of external facts and existences of constant kind).
- c. The School of Art (occupied in the development of active and productive human faculties).

In the school a, I would include Composition in all languages, Poetry, History, Archæology, Ethics.

In the school *b*, Mathematics, Political Economy, the Physical Sciences (including Geography and Medicine).

In the school *c*, Painting, Sculpture, including Architecture, Agriculture, Manufacture, War, Music, Bodily Exercises (Navigation in seaport schools,) including laws of health.

I should require, for a first class, proficiency in two schools; not, of course, in all the subjects of each chosen school, but in a well chosen and combined group of them. Thus, I should call a very good first-class man one who had got some such range of subjects, and such proficiency in each, as this :

English, Greek, and Mediæval-Italian Literature	High.
English and French History, and Archæology	Average.
Conic Sections	Thorough, as far as learnt.
Political Economy	Thorough, as far as learnt.
Botany, <i>or</i> Chemistry, <i>or</i> Physiology	High.
Painting	Average.
Music	Average.
Bodily Exercises	High.

I have written you a sadly long letter, but I could not manage to get it shorter.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Very faithfully and respectfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

REV. F. TEMPLE.

Perhaps I had better add what to you, but not to every one who considers such a scheme of education, would be palpable—that the main value of it would be brought out by judicious involution of its studies. This, for instance, would be the kind of Examination Paper I should hope for in the Botanical Class :

1. State the habit of such and such a plant.
2. Sketch its leaf, and a portion of its ramifications (memory).
3. Explain the mathematical laws of its growth and structure.
4. Give the composition of its juices in different seasons.
5. Its uses? Its relations to other families of plants, and conceivable uses beyond those known?

6. Its commercial value in London? Mode of cultivation?
7. Its mythological meaning? The commonest or most beautiful fables respecting it?
8. Quote any important references to it by great poets.
9. Time of its introduction.
10. Describe its consequent influence on civilization.

Of all these ten questions, there is not one which does not test the student in other studies than botany. Thus, 1, Geography; 2, Drawing; 3, Mathematics; 4, 5, Chemistry; 6, Political Economy; 7, 8, 9, 10, Literature.

Of course the plants required to be thus studied could be but few, and would rationally be chosen from the most useful of foreign plants, and those common and indigenous in England. All sciences should, I think, be taught more for the sake of their facts, and less for that of their system, than heretofore. Comprehensive and connected views are impossible to most men; the systems they learn are nothing but skeletons to them; but nearly all men can understand the relations of a few facts bearing on daily business, and to be exemplified in common substances. And science will soon be so vast that the most comprehensive men will still be narrow, and we shall see the fitness of rather teaching our youth to concentrate their general intelligence highly on given points than scatter it towards an infinite horizon from which they can fetch nothing, and to which they can carry nothing.

[From "Nature and Art," December 1, 1866.]

ART-TEACHING BY CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR MR. WILLIAMS: ' I like your plan of teaching by letter exceedingly: and not only so, but have myself adopted it largely, with the help of an intelligent under-master, whose operations, however, so far from interfering with, you will

¹ This letter was, it appears, originally addressed to an artist, Mr. Williams (of Southampton), and was then printed, some years later, in the number of *Nature and Art* above referred to.

much facilitate, if you can bring this literary way of teaching into more accepted practice. I wish we had more drawing-masters who were able to give instruction definite enough to be expressed in writing: many can teach nothing but a few tricks of the brush, and have nothing to write, because nothing to tell.

With every wish for your success,—a wish which I make quite as much in your pupils' interest as in your own,—

Believe me, always faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, *November, 1860.*

II.—PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND THE NATIONAL GALLERY.

[From "The Times," January 7, 1847.]

DANGER TO THE NATIONAL GALLERY.¹

To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR: As I am sincerely desirous that a stop may be put to the dangerous process of cleaning lately begun in our National Gallery, and as I believe that what is right is most effectively when most kindly advocated, and what is true most convinc-

¹Some words are necessary to explain this and the following letter. In the autumn of 1846 a correspondence was opened in the columns of *The Times* on the subject of the cleaning and restoration of the national pictures during the previous vacation. Mr. (afterwards Sir Charles) Eastlake was at this time Keeper of the Gallery, though he resigned office soon after this letter was written, partly in consequence of the attacks which had been made upon him. He was blamed, not only for restoring good pictures, but also for buying bad ones, and in particular the purchase of a "libel on Holbein" was quoted against him. The attack was led by the picture-dealer, and at one time artist, Mr. Morris Moore, writing at first under the pseudonym of "Verax," and afterwards in his own name. He continued his opposition through several years, especially during 1850 and 1852. He also published some pamphlets on the subject, amongst them one entitled "The Revival of Vandalism at the National Gallery, a reply to John Ruskin and others" (London, Ollivier, 1853). The whole discussion may be gathered in all its details from the Parliamentary Report of the Select Committee on the National Gallery in 1853.

ingly when least passionately asserted, I was grieved to see the violent attack upon Mr. Eastlake in your columns of Friday last; yet not less surprised at the attempted defence which appeared in them yesterday.¹ The outcry which has arisen upon this subject has been just, but it has been too loud; the injury done is neither so great nor so wilful as has been asserted, and I fear that the respect which might have been paid to remonstrance may be refused to clamor.

I was inclined at first to join as loudly as any in the hue and cry. Accustomed, as I have been, to look to England as the refuge of the pictorial as of all other distress, and to hope that, having no high art of her own, she would at least protect what she could not produce, and respect what she could not restore, I could not but look upon the attack which has been made upon the pictures in question as on the violation of a sanctuary. I had seen in Venice the noblest works of Veronese painted over with flake-white with a brush fit for tarring ships; I had seen in Florence Angelico's highest inspiration rotted and seared into fragments of old wood, burnt into blisters, or blotted into glutinous maps of mildew;² I had seen in Paris Raphael restored by David and Vernet; and I returned to England in the one last trust that, though her National Gallery was an European jest, her art a shadow, and her connoisseurship an hypocrisy, though she neither knew how to cherish nor how to choose, and lay exposed to the cheats of every vender of old canvas—yet that such good pictures as through chance or oversight might find their way beneath that preposterous portico, and into those melancholy and miserable rooms, were at least to be vindicated thenceforward from the mercy of publican, priest, or painter, safe alike from musketry, monkery, and manipulation.

¹ The "violent attack" alludes to a letter of "Verax" in *The Times* of Thursday (not Friday), December 31, 1846, and the "attempted defence" to another letter signed "A. G." in *The Times* of January 4, two days (not *the* day) before Mr. Ruskin wrote the present letter.

² The Crucifixion, or Adoration of the Cross, in the church of San Marco. An engraving of this picture may be found in *Mrs. Jameson's History of our Lord*, vol. i. p. 189.

But whatever pain I may feel at the dissipation of this dream, I am not disposed altogether to deny the necessity of some illuminatory process with respect to pictures exposed to a London atmosphere and populace. Dust an inch thick, accumulated upon the panes in the course of the day, and darkness closing over the canvas like a curtain, attest too forcibly the influence on floor and air of the "mutable, rank-scented, many." It is of little use to be over-anxious for the preservation of pictures which we cannot see; the only question is, whether in the present instance the process may not have been carried perilously far, and whether in future simpler and safer means may not be adopted to remove the coat of dust and smoke, without affecting either the glazing of the picture, or what is almost as precious, the mellow tone left by time.

As regards the "Peace and War,"¹ I have no hesitation in asserting that for the present it is utterly and forever partially destroyed. I am not disposed lightly to impugn the judgment of Mr. Eastlake, but this was indisputably of all the pictures in the Gallery that which least required, and least could endure the process of cleaning. It was in the most advantageous condition under which a work of Rubens can be seen; mellowed by time into more perfect harmony than when it left the easel, enriched and warmed, without losing any of its freshness or energy. The execution of the master is always so bold and frank as to be completely, perhaps even most agreeably, seen under circumstances of obscurity, which would be injurious to pictures of greater refinement; and, though this was, indeed, one of his most highly finished and careful works (to my mind, before it suffered this recent injury, far superior to everything at Antwerp, Malines, or Cologne), this was a more weighty reason for caution than for interference. Some portions of color have been exhibited which were formerly untraceable; but even these have lost in power what they have gained in definiteness—the majesty and preciousness of all the tones are departed, the balance of distances lost. Time may perhaps restore something of the glow, but never

¹ No. 46 in the National Gallery.

the subordination; and the more delicate portions of flesh tint, especially the back of the female figure on the left, and of the boy in the centre, are destroyed forever.

The large Cuyp¹ is, I think, nearly uninjured. Many portions of the foreground painting have been revealed, which were before only to be traced painfully, if at all. The distance has indeed lost the appearance of sunny haze, which was its chief charm, but this I have little doubt it originally did not possess, and in process of time may recover.

The "Bacchus and Ariadne"² of Titian has escaped so scot free that, not knowing it had been cleaned, I passed it without noticing any change. I observed only that the blue of the distance was more intense than I had previously thought it, though, four years ago, I said of that distance that it was "difficult to imagine anything more magnificently impossible, not from its vividness, but because it is *not faint and ærial enough* to account for its purity of color. There is so total a want of atmosphere in it, that but for the difference of form it would be impossible to distinguish the mountains from the robe of Ariadne."*

Your correspondent is alike unacquainted with the previous condition of this picture, and with the character of Titian distances in general, when he complains of a loss of ærial quality resulting in the present case from cleaning.

I unfortunately did not see the new Velasquez³ until it had undergone its discipline; but I have seldom met with an example of the master which gave me more delight, or which I believe to be in more genuine or perfect condition. I saw no

¹ Landscape, with Cattle and Figures—Evening (No. 53). Since the bequest of the somewhat higher "large Dort" in 1876 (No. 961), it has ceased to be "the large Cuyp."

² No. 35 in the National Gallery. This and the two pictures already mentioned were the typical instances of "spoilt pictures," quoted by "Verax."

³ Philip IV. of Spain, hunting the Wild Boar (No. 197), purchased in 1846.

* Modern Painters, vol. i.

traces of the retouching which is hinted at by your correspondent "Verax," nor are the touches on that canvas such as to admit of very easy or untraceable interpolation of meaner handling. His complaint of loss of substance in the figures of the foreground is, I have no doubt, altogether groundless. He has seen little southern scenery if he supposes that the brilliancy and apparent nearness of the silver clouds is in the slightest degree overcharged; and shows little appreciation of Velasquez in supposing him to have sacrificed the solemnity and might of such a distance to the inferior interest of the figures in the foreground. Had he studied the picture attentively, he might have observed that the position of the horizon suggests, and the *lateral* extent of the foreground *proves*, such a distance between the spectator and even its nearest figures as may well justify the slightness of their execution.

Even granting that some of the upper glazings of the figures had been removed, the tone of the whole picture is so light, gray, and glittering, and the dependence on the power of its whites so absolute, that I think the process hardly to be regretted which has left these in lustre so precious, and restored to a brilliancy which a comparison with any modern work of of similar aim would render apparently supernatural, the sparkling motion of its figures and the serene snow of its sky.

I believe I have stated to its fullest extent all the harm that has yet been done, yet I earnestly protest against any continuance of the treatment to which these pictures have been subjected. It is useless to allege that nothing but discolored varnish has been withdrawn, for it is perfectly possible to alter the structure and continuity, and so destroy the aerial relations of colors of which no part has been removed. I have seen the dark blue of a water-color drawing made opaque and pale merely by mounting it; and even supposing no other injury were done, every time a picture is cleaned it loses, like a restored building, part of its authority; and is thenceforward liable to dispute and suspicion, every one of its beauties open to question, while its faults are screened from accusation. It cannot be any more reasoned from with security; for, though allowance may be made for the effect of time, no one can cal-

culate the arbitrary and accidental changes occasioned by violent cleaning. None of the varnishes should be attacked; whatever the medium used, nothing but soot and dust should be taken away, and that chiefly by delicate and patient friction; and, in order to protract as long as possible the necessity even for this all the important pictures in the gallery should at once be put under glass,¹ and closed, not merely by hinged doors, like the Correggio, but permanently and securely. I should be glad to see this done in all rich galleries, but it is peculiarly necessary in the case of pictures exposed in London, and to a crowd freely admitted four days in the week: it would do good also by necessitating the enlargement of the rooms, and the bringing down of all the pictures to the level of the eye. Every picture that is worth buying or retaining is worth exhibiting in its proper place, and if its scale be large, and its handling rough, there is the more instruction to be gained by close study of the various means adopted by the master to secure his distant effect. We can certainly spare both the ground and the funds which would enable us to exhibit pictures for which no price is thought too large, and for all purposes of study and for most of enjoyment pictures are useless when they are even a little above the line. The fatigue complained of by most persons in examining a picture gallery is attributable, not only to the number of works, but to their confused order of succession, and to the straining of the sight in endeavoring to penetrate the details of those above the eye. Every gallery should be long enough to admit of its whole collection being hung in one line, side by side, and wide enough to allow of the specta-

¹ On this and other collateral subjects the reader is referred to the next letter; to Mr. Ruskin's evidence before the National Gallery Commission in 1857; and to the Appendix to his Notes on the Turner Gallery at Marlborough House, 1856-7. It is hardly necessary to state that a very large number of the national pictures, especially the Turners, are now preserved under glass. Of the other strictures here pronounced, some are no longer deserved; and it may well be remembered that at the time this letter was written the National Gallery had been founded less than five-and-twenty years.

tors retiring to the distance at which the largest picture was intended to be seen. The works of every master should be brought together and arranged in chronological order ; and such drawings or engravings as may exist in the collection, either of, or for, its pictures, or in any way illustrative of them, should be placed in frames opposite each, in the middle of the room.

But, Sir, the subjects of regret connected with the present management of our national collection are not to be limited either to its treatment or its arrangement. The principles of selection which have been acted upon in the course of the last five or six years have been as extraordinary as unjustifiable. Whatever may be the intrinsic power, interest, or artistical ability of the earlier essays of any school of art, it cannot be disputed that characteristic examples of every one of its most important phases should form part of a national collection : granting them of little value individually, their collective teaching is of irrefragable authority ; and the exhibition of perfected results alone, while the course of national progress through which these were reached is altogether concealed, is more likely to discourage than to assist the efforts of an undeveloped school. Granting even what the shallowest materialism of modern artists would assume, that the works of Perugino were of no value, but as they taught Raphael ; that John Bellini is altogether absorbed and overmastered by Titian ; that Nino Pisano was utterly superseded by Bandinelli or Cellini, and Ghirlandajo sunk in the shadow of Buonaroti : granting Van Eyck to be a mere mechanist, and Giotto a mere child, and Angelico a superstitious monk, and whatever you choose to grant that ever blindness deemed or insolence affirmed, still it is to be maintained and proved, that if we wish to have a Buonaroti or a Titian of our own, we shall with more wisdom learn of those of whom Buonaroti and Titian learned, and at whose knees they were brought up, and whom to the day of their death they ever revered and worshipped, than of those wretched pupils and partisans who sank every high function of art into a form and a faction, betrayed her trusts, darkened her traditions, overthrew her throne, and left us where we now are,

stumbling among its fragments. Sir, if the canvases of Guido, lately introduced into the gallery,¹ had been works of the best of those pupils, which they are not; if they had been good works of even that bad master, which they are not; if they had been genuine and untouched works, even though feeble, which they are not; if, though false and retouched remnants of a feeble and fallen school, they had been enduringly decent or elementarily instructive—some conceivable excuse might perhaps have been by ingenuity forged, and by impudence uttered, for their introduction into a gallery where we previously possessed two good Guidos,² and no Perugino (for the attribution to him of the wretched panel which now bears his name is a mere insult), no Angelico, no Fra Bartolomeo, no Albertinelli, no Ghirlandajo, no Verrochio, no Lorenzo di Credi—(what shall I more say, for the time would fail me?) But now, Sir, what vestige of apology remains for the cumbering our walls with pictures that have no single virtue, no color, no drawing, no character, no history, no thought? Yet 2,000 guineas were, I believe, given for one of those encumbrances, and 5,000 for the coarse and unnecessary Rubens,³ added to a room half filled with Rubens before, while a mighty and perfect work of Angelico was sold from Cardinal Fesch's

¹ Lot and his Daughters Leaving Sodom (No. 193), bequeathed to the gallery in 1844; and Susannah and the Elders (No. 196), purchased in the same year.

² The "two good Guidos" previously possessed are the St. Jerome (No. 11) and the Magdalen (No. 177). The "wretched panel" is No. 181, The Virgin and Infant Christ with St. John. For the rest, the gallery now includes two other Peruginos, The Virgin adoring the Infant Christ, the Archangel Michael, the Archangel Raphael and Tobias (No. 288), three panels, purchased in 1856, and the very recent (1879) purchase of the Virgin and Child with St. Jerome and St. Francis (No. 1075). It boasts also of two Angelicos—The Adoration of the Magi (No. 582) and Christ amid the Blessed (No. 663), purchased in 1857 and 1860; one Albertinelli, Virgin and Child (No. 645), also purchased in 1860; and two Lorenzo di Credis, both of the Virgin and Child (Nos. 593 and 648), purchased in 1857 and 1865. But it still possesses no Fra Bartolomeo, no Ghirlandajo, and no Verrochio.

³ The Judgment of Paris (No. 194), purchased from Mr. Penrice's collection in 1846.

collection for 1,500.¹ I do not speak of the spurious Holbein,² for though the veriest tyro might well be ashamed of such a purchase, it would have been a judicious addition had it been genuine, so was the John Bellini, so was the Van Eyck; but the mighty Venetian master, who alone of all the painters of Italy united purity of religious aim with perfection of artistical power, is poorly represented by a single head;³ and I ask, in the name of the earnest students of England, that the funds set apart for her gallery may no longer be played with like pebbles in London auction-rooms. Let agents be sent to all the cities of Italy; let the noble pictures which are perishing there be rescued from the invisibility and ill-treatment which their position too commonly implies, and let us have a national collection which, however imperfect, shall be orderly and continuous, and shall exhibit with something like relative candor and justice the claims to our reverence of those great and ancient builders, whose mighty foundation has been for two centuries concealed by wood, and hay, and stubble, the distorted growing, and thin gleanings of vain men in blasted fields.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR OF "MODERN PAINTERS."

January 6.

¹ The Last Judgment; its purchaser was the Earl of Dudley, in whose possession the picture, now hanging at Dudley House in London, has ever since remained. An engraving of this work (pronounced the finest of Angelico's four representations of this subject), may be found in Mrs. Jameson's *History of our Lord*, vol. ii. p. 414. Cardinal Fesch was Archbishop of Lyons, and the uncle of Napoleon Buonaparte. His gallery contained in its time the finest private collection of pictures in Rome.

² The "libel on Holbein" was bought as an original, from Mr. Rochard, in 1845. It now figures in the National Gallery as A Medical Professor—artist unknown (No. 195).

³ The Bellini is the portrait of Doge Leonardo Loredano (No. 189), purchased in 1844: four more examples (Nos. 280, 726, 808, 812) of the same "mighty Venetian master" have since been introduced, so that he is no longer "poorly represented by a single head." The Van Eyck is the Portrait of Jean Arnolfini and his Wife (No. 186), purchased in 1842.

[From "The Times," December 29, 1852.]

THE NATIONAL GALLERY.

To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR: I trust that the excitement which has been caused by the alleged destruction of some of the most important pictures in the National Gallery will not be without results, whatever may be the facts in the case with respect to the works in question. Under the name of "restoration," the ruin of the noblest architecture and painting is constant throughout Europe. We shall show ourselves wiser than our neighbors if the loss of two Claudes and the injury of a Paul Veronese¹ induce us to pay so much attention to the preservation of ancient art as may prevent it from becoming a disputed question in future whether they are indeed pictures which we possess or their skeletons.

As to the facts in the present instance, I can give no opinion. Sir Charles Eastlake and Mr. Uwins² know more than I of oil paintings in general, and have far more profound respect for those of Claude in particular. I do not suppose they would have taken from him his golden armor that Turner might bear away a dishonorable victory in the noble passage of arms to which he has challenged his rival from the grave.*

¹ Claude's Marriage of Isaac and Rebecca (No. 12), and his Queen of Sheba picture (No. 14, Seaport, with figures). The only pictures of Veronese which the Gallery at this time contained, were the Consecration of St. Nicholas (No. 26), and the Rape of Europa (No. 97). It is the former of these two that is here spoken of as injured (see the Report of the National Gallery Committee in 1853).

² Mr. Thomas Uwins, R.A., had succeeded Sir Charles Eastlake as Keeper of the National Gallery in 1847; and resigned, for a similar reason, in 1855.

* The public may not, perhaps, be generally aware that the condition by which the nation retains the two pictures bequeathed to it by Turner, and now in the National Gallery, is that "they shall be hung beside Claude's."³

³ Dido building Carthage (No. 498), and The Sun rising in a Mist (No. 479). The actual wording of Turner's will on the matter ran thus: "I

Nor can the public suppose that the Curators of the National Gallery have any interest in destroying the works with which they are intrusted. If, acting to the best of their judgment, they have done harm, to whom are we to look for greater prudence or better success? Are the public prepared to withdraw their confidence from Sir C. Eastlake and the members of the Royal Academy, and entrust the national property to Mr. Morris Moore, or to any of the artists and amateurs who have inflamed the sheets of *The Times* with their indignation? Is it not evident that the only security which the nation can possess for its pictures must be found in taking such measures as may in future prevent the necessity of their being touched at all? For this is very certain, that all question respecting the effects of cleaning is merely one of the amount of injury. Every picture which has undergone more friction than is necessary at intervals for the removal of dust or dirt, has suffered injury to some extent. The last touches of the master leave the surface of the color with a certain substantial texture, the bloom of which, if once reached under the varnish, must inevitably be more or less removed by friction of any kind—how much more by friction aided by solvents? I am well assured that every possessor of pictures who truly loves them, would keep—if it might be—their surfaces from being so much as breathed upon, which may, indeed, be done, and done easily.

Every stranger who enters our National Gallery, if he be a thoughtful person, must assuredly put to himself a curious question. Perceiving that certain pictures—namely, three Correggios, two Raphaels and a John Bellini—are put under glass,¹ and that all the others are left exposed, as oil pictures are in general, he must ask himself, “Is it an ascertained fact that glass preserves pictures; and are none of the pictures here

direct that the said pictures, or paintings, shall be hung, kept, and placed, that is to say, always between the two pictures painted by Claude, the Seaport and the Mill.” Accordingly they now hang side by side with these two pictures (Nos. 5 and 12) in the National Gallery.

¹ See p. 52, note.

thought worth a pane of glass but these five? ¹ Or is it unascertained whether glass is beneficial or injurious, and have the Raphaels and Correggios been selected for the trial—‘*Fiat experimentum in corpore vili?*’” Some years ago it might have been difficult to answer him; now the answer is easy, though it be strange. The experiment has been made. The Raphaels and Correggios have been under glass for many years: they are as fresh and lovely as when they were first enclosed; they need no cleaning, and will need none for half a century to come; and it must be, therefore, that the rest of the pictures are left exposed to the London atmosphere, and to the operations which its influence renders necessary, simply because they are not thought worth a pane of plate glass. No: there is yet one other possible answer—that many of them are hung so high, or in such lights, that they could not be seen if they were glazed. Is it then absolutely necessary that they should be hung so high? We are about to build a new National Gallery; may it not be so arranged as that the pictures we place therein may at once be safe and visible?

I know that this has never yet been done in any gallery in Europe, for the European public have never yet reflected that a picture which was worth buying was also worth seeing. Some time or other they will assuredly awake to the perception of this wonderful truth, and it would be some credit to our English common-sense if we were the first to act upon it.

I say that a picture which is worth buying is also worth seeing; that is, worth so much room of ground and wall as shall enable us to see it to the best advantage. It is not commonly so understood. Nations, like individuals, buy their pictures in mere ostentation; and are content, so that their possessions are acknowledged that they should be hung in any dark or out-of-the-way corners which their frames will fit. Or, at best, the popular idea of a national gallery is that of a magnificent palace, whose walls must be decorated with colored panels, every one of which shall cost £1,000, and be discernible, through a telescope, for the work of a mighty hand

¹ Query, a misprint? as *six* pictures are mentioned.

I have no doubt that in a few years more there will be a change of feeling in this matter, and that men will begin to perceive, what is indeed the truth—that every noble picture is a manuscript book, of which only one copy exists, or ever can exist; that a national gallery is a great library,¹ of which the books must be read upon their shelves; that every manuscript ought, therefore, to be placed where it can be read most easily; and that the style of the architecture and the effect of the saloons are matters of no importance whatsoever, but that our solicitude ought to begin and end in the two imperative requirements—that every picture in the gallery should be perfectly seen and perfectly safe; that none should be thrust up, or down, or aside, to make room for more important ones; that all should be in a good light, all on a level with the eye, and all secure from damp, cold, impurity of atmosphere, and every other avoidable cause of deterioration.

These are the things to be accomplished; and if we set ourselves to do these in our new National Gallery,² we shall have made a greater step in art-teaching than if we had built a new Parthenon.³ I know that it will be a strange idea to most of us that Titians and Tintorets ought, indeed, all to have places upon “the line,” as well as the annual productions of our Royal Academicians; and I know that the *coup d’œil* of the Gallery must be entirely destroyed by such an arrangement. But great pictures ought not to be subjects of “*coups d’œil*.” In the last arrangement of the Louvre, under the Republic, all the noble pictures in the gallery were brought into

¹ “The Art of a nation is, I think, one of the most important points of its history, and a part which, if once destroyed, no history will ever supply the place of; and the first idea of a National Gallery is that it should be a Library of Art, in which the rudest efforts are, in some cases, hardly less important than the noblest.”—National Gallery Commission, 1857: Mr. Ruskin’s evidence.

² It was at this time proposed to remove the national pictures from Trafalgar Square to some new building to be erected for them elsewhere. This proposal was, however, negatived by the commission ultimately appointed (1857) to consider the matter, and to some extent rendered unnecessary by the enlargement of the gallery, decided upon in 1866.

one room, with a Napoleon-like resolution to produce effect by concentration of force ; and, indeed, I would not part willingly with the memory of that saloon, whose obscurest shadows were full of Correggio ; in whose out-of-the-way angles one forgot, here and there, a Raphael ; and in which the best Tintoret on this side of the Alps was hung sixty feet from the ground !¹ But Cleopatra dissolving the pearl was nothing to this ; and I trust that, in our own Gallery, our poverty, if not our will, may consent to a more modest and less lavish manner of displaying such treasures as are intrusted to us ; and that the very limitation of our possessions may induce us to make that the object of our care, which can hardly be a ground of ostentation. It might, indeed, be a matter of some difficulty to conceive an arrangement of the collections in the Louvre or the Florence Gallery which should admit of every picture being hung upon the line. But the works in our own, including the Vernon and Turner bequests,² present no obstacle in their number to our making the building which shall receive them a perfect model of what a National Gallery ought to be. And the conditions of this perfection are so simple that if we only turn our attention to these main points it will need no great architectural ingenuity to attain all that is required.

It is evident, in the first place, that the building ought to consist of a series of chambers or galleries lighted from above, and built with such reference to the pictures they are to contain, as that opposite a large picture room enough should be allowed for the spectator to retire to the utmost distance at which it can ever be desirable that its effect should

¹ The galleries of the Louvre were reorganized on their being declared national instead of crown property, after the Revolution of 1848 ; and the choicest pictures were then collected together in the "grand salon carré," which, although since rearranged, still contains a similar selection. The "best Tintoret on this side of the Alps" is the *Susannah and the Elders*, now No. 349 in that room.

² The *gift* of Mr. Robert Vernon, in 1847, consisted of 157 pictures, all of them, with two exceptions only, of the British school. The Turner bequest included 105 finished oil paintings, in addition to the numerous sketches and drawings.

be seen ; but, as economy of space would become a most important object when every picture was to be hung on a level with the eye, smaller apartments might open from the larger ones for the reception of smaller pictures, one condition being, however, made imperative, whatever space was sacrificed to it —namely, that the works of every master should be collected together, either in the same apartment or in contiguous ones. Nothing has so much retarded the advance of art as our miserable habit of mixing the works of every master and of every century. More would be learned by an ordinarily intelligent observer in simply passing from a room in which there were only Titians, to another in which there were only Caraccis, than by reading a volume of lectures on color. Few minds are strong enough first to abstract and then to generalize the characters of paintings hung at random. Few minds are so dull as not at once to perceive the points of difference, were the works of each painter set by themselves. The fatigue of which most persons complain in passing through a picture gallery, as at present arranged, is indeed partly caused by the straining effort to see what is out of sight, but not less by the continual change of temper and of tone of thought demanded in passing from the work of one master to that of another.

The works of each being, therefore, set by themselves,* and the whole collection arranged in chronological and ethnological order, let apartments be designed for each group large enough to admit of the increase of the existing collection to any probable amount. The whole gallery would thus become of great length, but might be adapted to any form of ground-plan by disposing the whole in a labyrinthine chain, returning upon itself. Its chronological arrangement would necessitate its being continuous, rather than divided into many branches or sections. Being lighted from above, it must be all on the same floor, but ought at least to be raised one story

* An example of a cognate school might, however, be occasionally introduced for the sake of direct comparison, as in one instance would be necessitated by the condition above mentioned attached to part of the Turner bequest.

above the ground, and might admit any number of keepers' apartments, or of schools, beneath ; though it would be better to make it quite independent of these, in order to diminish the risk of fire. Its walls ought on every side to be surrounded by corridors, so that the interior temperature might be kept equal, and no outer surface of wall on which pictures were hung exposed to the weather. Every picture should be glazed, and the horizon which the painter had given to it placed on a level with the eye.

Lastly, opposite each picture should be a table, containing, under glass, every engraving that had ever been made from it, and any studies for it, by the master's own hand, that remained, or were obtainable. The values of the study and of the picture are reciprocally increased—of the former more than doubled—by their being seen together ; and if this system were once adopted, the keepers of the various galleries of Europe would doubtless consent to such exchanges of the sketches in their possession as would render all their collections more interesting.

I trust, Sir, that the importance of this subject will excuse the extent of my trespass upon your columns, and that the simplicity and self-evident desirableness of the arrangement I have described may vindicate my proposal of it from the charge of presumption.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR OF "MODERN PAINTERS."

HERNE HILL, DULWICH, Dec. 27.

[From "The Times," January 27, 1866.]

THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR : As I see in your impression of yesterday that my name was introduced in support of some remarks made, at the meeting of the Society of Arts, on the management of the

British Museum,¹ and as the tendency of the remarks I refer to was depreciatory of the efforts and aims of several officers of the Museum—more especially of the work done on the collection of minerals by my friend Mr. Nevil S. Maskelyne²—you will, I hope, permit me, not having been present at the meeting, to express my feeling on the subject briefly in your columns.

There is a confused notion in the existing public mind that the British Museum is partly a parish school, partly a circulating library, and partly a place for Christmas entertainments.

It is none of the three, and, I hope, will never be made any of the three. But especially and most distinctly it is not a “preparatory school,” nor even an “academy for young gentlemen,” nor even a “working-men’s college.” A national museum is one thing, a national place of education another; and the more sternly and unequivocally they are separated, the better will each perform its office—the one of treasuring and the other of teaching. I heartily wish that there were already, as one day there must be, large educational museums in every district of London, freely open every day, and well lighted and warmed at night, with all furniture of comfort, and full aids for the use of their contents by all classes. But you might just as rationally send the British public to the Tower to study mineralogy upon the Crown jewels as make the unique pieces of a worthy national collection (such as, owing mainly to the exertions of its maligned officers, that of our British Museum has recently become) the means of elementary public instruction. After men have learnt their science or their art, at least so far as to know a common and

¹ At the meeting of the Society, in the Hall, Adelphi, Lord Henry Lennox read a paper on “The Uses of National Museums to Local Institutions,” in which he spoke of Mr. Ruskin’s suggestions “adopted and recommended to Parliament in annual reports, and in obedience to distinct Commissions,” as having been unwarrantably disregarded since 1858. See Mr. Ruskin’s official report on the Turner Bequest, printed in the Report of the Director of the National Gallery to the Lords of the Treasury, 1858, Appendix vii.

² Professor Nevil Story-Maskelyne (now M.P. for Cricklade) was then, and till his recent resignation, Keeper of Mineralogy at the Museum.

a rare example in either, a national museum is useful, and ought to be easily accessible to them ; but until then, unique or selected specimens in natural history are without interest to them, and the best art is as useless as a blank wall. For all those who can use the existing national collection to any purpose, the Catalogue as it now stands is amply sufficient : it would be difficult to conceive a more serviceable one. But the rapidly progressive state of (especially mineralogical) science, renders it impossible for the Curators to make their arrangements in all points satisfactory or for long periods permanent. It is just because Mr. Maskelyne is doing more active, continual, and careful work than, as far as I know, is at present done in any national museum in Europe—because he is completing gaps in the present series by the intercalation of carefully sought specimens, and accurately reforming its classification by recently corrected analyses—that the collection cannot yet fall into the formal and placid order in which an indolent Curator would speedily arrange and willingly leave it.

I am glad that Lord H. Lennox referred to the passage in my report on the Turner Collection in which I recommended that certain portions of that great series should be distributed, for permanence, among our leading provincial towns.¹ But I had rather see the whole Turner Collection buried, not merely in the cellars of the National Gallery, but with Prospero's staff fathoms in the earth, than that it should be the

¹ In Mr. Ruskin's official report already mentioned, and which was made at the close of his labors in arranging the Turner drawings, and dated March 27, 1858, he divided the collection into three classes, of which the third consisted of drawings available for distribution among provincial Schools of Art. The passage of the report referred to is as follows : "The remainder of the collection consists of drawings of miscellaneous character, from which many might be spared with little loss to the collection in London, and great advantage to students in the provinces. Five or six collections, each completely illustrative of Turner's modes of study, and successions of practice, might easily be prepared for the academies of Edinburgh, Dublin, and the principal English manufacturing towns."—See also the similar recommendation with regard to the Outlines of John Leech, in the letter on that subject.

means of inaugurating the fatal custom of carrying great works of art about the roads for a show. If you *must* make them educational to the public, hang Titian's Bacchus up for a vintner's sign, and give Henry VI.'s Psalter¹ for a spelling-book to the Bluecoat School ; but, at least, hang the one from a permanent post, and chain the other to the boys' desks, and do not send them about in caravans to every annual Bartholomew Fair.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, *Jun. 26.*

[From "The Leicester Chronicle and Mercury," January 31, and reprinted in "The Times," February 2, 1880.]

ON THE PURCHASE OF PICTURES.*

DEAR SIR: Your letter is deeply interesting to me, but what use is there in my telling you what to do? The mob won't let you do it. It is fatally true that no one nowadays can appreciate pictures by the Old Masters! and that every one can understand Frith's "Derby Day"—that is to say, everybody is interested in jockeys, harlots, mountebanks, and men about town ; but nobody in saints, heroes, kings, or wise men—either from the east or west. What can you do? If your Committee is strong enough to carry such a resolution as the appointment of any *singly* responsible person, any well-informed gentleman of taste in your neighborhood, to buy for the Leicester public just what he would buy for himself—that is to say, himself *and his family*—children being the really most important of the untaught public—and to answer simply to all accusation—that is, a good and worthy piece of art

¹ Titian's Bacchus and Ariadne—already mentioned, p. 40. Henry VI.'s Psalter is in the British Museum ("Domitian A. 17," in the Cottonian Catalogue). It is of early fifteenth century work, and was executed in England by a French artist for the then youthful king, from whom it takes its name.

* This letter was written in reply to one requesting Mr. Ruskin's views on the best means of forming a public Gallery at Leicester.

(past or present, no matter which)—make the most and best you can of it. That method so long as tenable will be useful. I know of no other.

Faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

III.—PRE-RAPHAELITISM.

[From "The Times," May 13, 1851.]

THE PRE-RAPHAELITE BRETHERN.

To the Editor of "*The Times*."

SIR: Your usual liberality will, I trust, give a place in your columns to this expression of my regret that the tone of the critique which appeared in *The Times* of Wednesday last on the works of Mr. Millais and Mr. Hunt, now in the Royal Academy, should have been scornful as well as severe.¹

I regret it, first, because the mere labor bestowed on those works, and their fidelity to a certain order of truth (labor and fidelity which are altogether indisputable), ought at once to have placed them above the level of mere contempt; and, secondly, because I believe these young artists to be at a most critical period of their career—at a turning-point, from which they may either sink into nothingness or rise to very real greatness; and I believe also, that whether they choose the upward or the downward path, may in no small degree depend upon the character of the criticism which their works have to sustain. I do not wish in any way to dispute or in-

¹ That the critique was sufficiently bitter, may be gathered from the following portions of it: "These young artists have unfortunately become notorious by addicting themselves to an antiquated style and an affected simplicity in painting. . . . We can extend no toleration to a mere senile imitation of the cramped style, false perspective, and crude color of remote antiquity. We want not to see what Fuseli termed drapery 'snapped instead of folded;' faces bloated into apoplexy, or extenuated to skeletons; color borrowed from the jars in a druggist's shop, and expression forced into caricature. . . . That morbid infatuation which sacrifices truth, beauty, and genuine feeling to mere eccentricity, deserves no quarter at the hands of the public."

validate the general truth of your critique on the Royal Academy; nor am I surprised at the estimate which the writer formed of the pictures in question when rapidly compared with works of totally different style and aim; nay, when I first saw the chief picture by Millais in the Exhibition of last year,¹ I had nearly come to the same conclusion myself. But I ask your permission, in justice to artists who have at least given much time and toil to their pictures, to institute some more serious inquiry into their merits and faults than your general notice of the Academy could possibly have admitted.

Let me state, in the first place, that I have no acquaintance with any of these artists, and very imperfect sympathy with them. No one who has met with any of my writings will suspect me of desiring to encourage them in their Romanist and Tractarian tendencies.² I am glad to see that Mr. Millais' lady in blue³ is heartily tired of her painted window and idolatrous toilet-table; and I have no particular respect for

¹ A sacred picture (No. 518) upon the text, "And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends" (Zechariah xiii. 6). He had two other pictures in the Academy of 1850, namely, Portrait of a gentleman and his grandchild (No. 429), and Ferdinand lured by Ariel (No. 504)—Shakespeare, *Tempest*, Act ii. sc. 2.

² See the next letter, p. 70. With regard to the religious tone of some parts of Mr. Ruskin's early writings, it is worth noting that in the recent reissue (1880) of the *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, "some pieces of rabid and utterly false Protestantism . . . are cut from text and appendix alike."—(Preface, p. 1; and see the note on one such omission on p. 19). So again in the preface to the final edition of *Modern Painters*, issued in 1873, Mr. Ruskin stated that his objection to republishing unrevised the first two volumes of that work was that "they are written in a narrow enthusiasm, and the substance of their metaphysical and religious speculation is only justifiable on the ground of its absolute sincerity."—See also *Sesame and Lilies*, 1871 ed., Preface, p. 2.

³ The pre-Raphaelite pictures exhibited in the Academy of this year, and referred to here and in the following letter, were the *Mariana* (No. 561) of Millais, *The Return of the Dove to the Ark* (No. 65), and *The Woodman's Daughter* (No. 799), (see *Coventry Patmore's Poems*, vol. i. p. 184—4 vol. ed., 1879), both also by Millais; the *Valentine receiving (rescuing?) Sylvia from Proteus* (No. 594), of Holman Hunt:

Mr. Collins' lady in white, because her sympathies are limited by a dead wall, or divided between some gold fish and a tad-pole—(the latter Mr. Collins may, perhaps, permit me to suggest *en passant*, as he is already half a frog, is rather too small for his age). But I happen to have a special acquaintance with the water plant *Alisma Plantago*, among which the said gold fish are swimming; and as I never saw it so thoroughly or so well drawn, I must take leave to remonstrate with you, when you say sweepingly that these men "sacrifice *truth* as well as feeling to eccentricity." For as a mere botanical study of the water-lily and *Alisma*, as well as of the common lily and several other garden flowers, this picture would be invaluable to me, and I heartily wish it were mine.

But, before entering into such particulars, let me correct an impression which your article is likely to induce in most minds, and which is altogether false. These pre-Raphaelites (I cannot compliment them on common-sense in choice of a *nom de guerre*) do *not* desire nor pretend in any way to imitate antique painting as such. They know very little of ancient paintings who suppose the works of these young artists to resemble them.¹ As far as I can judge of their aim—for, as I

and the Convent Thoughts (No. 493) of Mr. C. Collins, to which were affixed the lines from *Midsummer Night's Dream* (Act i. sc. 1)

"Thrice blessed they, that master so their blood
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage;"

and the verse (Psalm cxliii. 5), "I meditate on all Thy works; I muse on the work of Thy hands." The last-named artist also had a portrait of Mr. William Bennett (No. 718) in the Exhibition—not, however, alluded to in this letter. Mr. Charles Allston Collins, who was the son of William Collins, R. A., and the younger brother of Mr. Wilkie Collins, subsequently turned his attention to literature, and may be remembered as the author of *A Cruise upon Wheels*, *The Eye-Witness*, and other writings.

¹ Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. i. p. 415, note, where allusion is made to the painters of a society which unfortunately, or rather unwisely, has given itself the name of 'Pre-Raphaelite;' unfortunately, because the principles on which its members are working are neither pre- nor post-Raphaelite, but everlasting. They are endeavoring to paint with the highest possible degree of completion, what they see in nature, without reference to conventional established rules; but by no means to imitate the style of any past epoch.

said, I do not know the men themselves—the pre-Raphaelites intend to surrender no advantage which the knowledge or inventions of the present time can afford to their art. They intend to return to early days in this one point only—that, as far as in them lies, they will draw either what they see, or what they suppose might have been the actual facts of the scene they desire to represent, irrespective of any conventional rules of picture-making; and they have chosen their unfortunate though not inaccurate name because all artists did this before Raphael's time, and after Raphael's time did *not* this, but sought to paint fair pictures, rather than represent stern facts; of which the consequence has been that, from Raphael's time to this day, historical art has been in acknowledged decadence.

Now, sir, presupposing that the intention of these men was to return to archaic *art* instead of to archaic *honesty*, your critic borrows Fuseli's expression respecting ancient draperies "snapped instead of folded," and asserts that in these pictures there is a "*servile imitation of false perspective.*" To which I have just this to answer:

That there is not one single error in perspective in four out of the five pictures in question; and that in Millais' "*Mariana*" there is but this one—that the top of the green curtain in the distant window has too low a vanishing-point; and that I will undertake, if need be, to point out and prove a dozen worse errors in perspective in any twelve pictures, containing architecture, taken at random from among the works of the popular painters of the day.

Secondly: that, putting aside the small Mulready, and the works of Thorburn and Sir W. Ross, and perhaps some others of those in the miniature room which I have not examined, there is not a single study of drapery in the whole Academy, be it in large works or small, which for perfect truth, power, and finish could be compared for an instant with the black sleeve of the Julia, or with the velvet on the breast and the chain mail of the Valentine, of Mr. Hunt's picture; or with the white draperies on the table of Mr. Millais' "*Mariana*," and of the right-hand figure in the same painter's "*Dove returning to the Ark.*"

And further : that as studies both of drapery and of every minor detail, there has been nothing in art so earnest or so complete as these pictures since the days of Albert Durer. This I assert generally and fearlessly. On the other hand, I am perfectly ready to admit that Mr. Hunt's "Sylvia" is not a person whom Proteus or any one else would have been likely to fall in love with at first sight ; and that one cannot feel very sincere delight that Mr. Millais' "Wives of the Sons of Noah" should have escaped the Deluge ; with many other faults besides, on which I will not enlarge at present, because I have already occupied too much of your valuable space, and I hope to enter into more special criticism in a future letter.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR OF "MODERN PAINTERS."

DENMARK HILL, May 9.

[From "The Times," May 30, 1851.]

THE PRE-RAPHAELITE BRETHREN.

To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR : Your obliging insertion of my former letter encourages me to trouble you with one or two further notes respecting the pre-Raphaelite pictures. I had intended, in continuation of my first letter, to institute as close an inquiry as I could into the character of the morbid tendencies which prevent these works from favorably arresting the attention of the public ; but I believe there are so few pictures in the Academy whose reputation would not be grievously diminished by a deliberate inventory of their errors, that I am disinclined to undertake so ungracious a task with respect to this or that particular work. These points, however, may be noted, partly for the consideration of the painters themselves, partly that forgiveness of them may be asked from the public in consideration of high merits in other respects.

The most painful of these defects is unhappily also the most prominent—the commonness of feature in many of the

principal figures. In Mr. Hunt's "Valentine defending Sylvia," this is, indeed, almost the only fault. Further examination of this picture has even raised the estimate I had previously formed of its marvellous truth in detail and splendor of color ; nor is its general conception less deserving of praise ; the action of Valentine, his arm thrown round Sylvia, and his hand clasping hers at the same instant as she falls at his feet, most faithful and beautiful, nor less so the contending of doubt and distress with awakening hope in the half-shadowed, half-sunlit countenance of Julia. Nay, even the momentary struggle of Proteus with Sylvia just past, is indicated by the odden grass and broken fungi of the foreground. But all this thoughtful conception, and absolutely inimitable execution, fail in making immediate appeal to the feelings, owing to the unfortunate type chosen for the face of Sylvia. Certainly this cannot be she whose lover was

" As rich in having such a jewel,
As twenty seas, if all their sands were pearl." ¹

or is it, perhaps, less to be regretted that, while in Shakespeare's play there are nominally "Two Gentlemen," in Mr. Hunt's picture there should only be one—at least, the kneeling figure on the right has by no means the look of a gentleman. But this may be on purpose, for any one who remembers the conduct of Proteus throughout the previous scenes will, I think, be disposed to consider that the error lies more in Shakespeare's nomenclature than in Mr. Hunt's ideal.

No defence can, however, be offered for the choice of features in the left-hand figure of Mr. Millais' "Dove returning to the Ark." I cannot understand how a painter so sensible of the utmost refinement of beauty in other objects should deliberately choose for his model a type far inferior to that of average humanity, and unredeemed by any expression save that of dull self-complacency. Yet, let the spectator who desires to be just turn away from this head, and contemplate

¹ Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act ii. sc. 4. The scene of the picture is taken from Act v. sc. 4.

rather the tender and beautiful expression of the stooping figure, and the intense harmony of color in the exquisitely finished draperies ; let him note also the ruffling of the plumage of the wearied dove, one of its feathers falling on the arm of the figure which holds it, and another to the ground, where, by the bye, the hay is painted not only elaborately, but with the most perfect ease of touch and mastery of effect, especially to be observed because this freedom of execution is a modern excellence, which it has been inaccurately stated that these painters despise, but which, in reality, is one of the remarkable distinctions between their painting and that of Van Eyck or Hemling, which caused me to say in my first letter that "those knew little of ancient painting who supposed the works of these men to resemble it."

Next to this false choice of feature, and in connection with it, is to be noted the defect in the coloring of the flesh. The hands, at least in the pictures in Millais, are almost always ill painted, and the flesh tint in general is wrought out of crude purples and dusky yellows. It appears just possible that much of this evil may arise from the attempt to obtain too much transparency—an attempt which has injured also not a few of the best works of Mulready. I believe it will be generally found that close study of minor details is unfavorable to flesh painting ; it was noticed of the drawing by John Lewis, in the old water-color exhibition of 1850,¹ (a work which, as regards its treatment of detail, may be ranged in the same class with the pre-Raphaelite pictures), that the faces were the worst painted portions of the whole.

The apparent want of shade is, however, perhaps the fault which most hurts the general eye. The fact is, nevertheless, that the fault is far more in the other pictures of the Academy than in the pre-Raphaelite ones. It is the former that are

¹ The Hhareem (No. 147), noticed, partly to the above effect, in *The Times*, May 1, 1850. It will be remembered that John Lewis is, with Turner, Millais, Prout, Mulready, and Edwin Landseer, one of the artists particularly mentioned in Mr. Ruskin's pamphlet on "Pre-Raphaelism" (1851). p. 33 ; and see also *Academy Notes*, III., 1857, p. 48.

false, not the latter, except so far as every picture must be false which endeavors to represent living sunlight with dead pigments. I think Mr. Hunt has a slight tendency to exaggerate reflected lights; and if Mr. Millais has ever been near a piece of good painted glass, he ought to have known that its tone is more dusky and sober than that of his Mariana's window. But for the most part these pictures are rashly condemned because the only light which we are accustomed to see represented is that which falls on the artist's model in his dim painting room, not that of sunshine in the fields.

I do not think I can go much further in fault-finding. I had, indeed, something to urge respecting what I supposed to be the Romanizing tendencies of the painters; but I have received a letter assuring me that I was wrong in attributing to them anything of the kind; whereupon, all that I can say is that, instead of the "pilgrimage" of Mr. Collins' maiden over a plank and round a fish-pond, that old pilgrimage of Christiana and her children towards the place where they should "look the Fountain of Mercy in the face," would have been more to the purpose in these times. And so I wish them all heartily good-speed, believing in sincerity that if they temper the courage and energy which they have shown in the adoption of their systems with patience and discretion in framing it, and if they do not suffer themselves to be driven by harsh or careless criticism into rejection of the ordinary means of obtaining influence over the minds of others, they may, as they gain experience, lay in our England the foundations of a school of art nobler than the world has seen for three hundred years.¹

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR OF "MODERN PAINTERS."

DENMARK HILL, *May 26.*

¹ "I have great hope that they may become the foundation of a more earnest and able school of art than we have seen for centuries."—*Modern Painters*, vol. i., p. 415, note.

[From "The Times," May 5, 1854.]

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

By HOLMAN HUNT.

To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR: I trust that, with your usual kindness and liberality, you will give me room in your columns for a few words respecting the principal præ-Raphaelite picture in the Exhibition of the Royal Academy this year. Its painter is travelling in the Holy Land, and can neither suffer nor benefit by criticism. But I am solicitous that justice should be done to his work, not for his sake, but for that of the large number of persons who, during the year, will have an opportunity of seeing it, and on whom, if rightly understood, it may make an impression for which they will ever afterwards be grateful.¹

I speak of the picture called "the Light of the World," by Mr. Holman Hunt. Standing by it yesterday for upwards of an hour, I watched the effect it produced upon the passers-by. Few stopped to look at it, and those who did almost invariably with some contemptuous expression, founded on what appeared to them the absurdity of representing the Saviour with a lantern in his hand. Now, it ought to be remembered that, whatever may be the faults of a præ-Raphaelite picture, it must at least have taken much time; and therefore it may not unwarrantably be presumed that conceptions which are to be laboriously realized are not adopted in the first instance without some reflection. So that the spectator may surely question with himself whether the objections which now strike every one in a moment might not possibly have occurred to the painter himself, either during the time devoted to the design of the picture, or the months of labor required

¹ Of the two pictures described in this and the following letter, *The Light of the World* is well known from the engraving of it by W. H. Simmons. It was originally purchased by Mr. Thomas Combe, of Oxford, whose widow has recently presented it to Keble College, where it now hangs, in the library. The subject of the second picture, which is less well known, and which has never been engraved, sufficiently appears from the letter describing it.

for its execution ; and whether, therefore, there may not be some reason for his persistence in such an idea, not discoverable at the first glance.

Mr. Hunt has never explained his work to me. I give what appears to me its palpable interpretation.

The legend beneath it is the beautiful verse, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."—Rev. iii. 20. On the left-hand side of the picture is seen this door of the human soul. It is fast barred : its bars and nails are rusty ; it is knitted and bound to its stanchions by creeping tendrils of ivy, showing that it has never been opened. A bat hovers about it ; its threshold is overgrown with brambles, nettles, and fruitless corn—the wild grass "whereof the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth the sheaves his bosom." Christ approaches it in the night-time—Christ, in his everlasting offices of prophet, priest, and king. He wears the white robe, representing the power of the Spirit upon him ; the jewelled robe and breast-plate, representing the sacerdotal investiture ; the rayed crown of gold, inwoven with the crown of thorns ; not dead thorns, but now bearing soft leaves, for the healing of the nations.

Now, when Christ enters any human heart, he bears with him a twofold light : first, the light of conscience, which displays past sin, and afterwards the light of peace, the hope of salvation. The lantern, carried in Christ's left hand, is this light of conscience. Its fire is red and fierce ; it falls only on the closed door, on the weeds which encumber it, and on an apple shaken from one of the trees of the orchard, thus marking that the entire awakening of the conscience is not merely to committed, but to hereditary guilt.

The light is suspended by a chain, wrapt about the wrist of the figure, showing that the light which reveals sin appears to the sinner also to chain the hand of Christ.

The light which proceeds from the head of the figure, on the contrary, is that of the hope of salvation ; it springs from the crown of thorns, and, though itself sad, subdued, and full of softness, is yet so powerful that it entirely melts into

the glow of it the forms of the leaves and boughs, which it crosses, showing that every earthly object must be hidden by this light, where its sphere extends.

I believe there are very few persons on whom the picture, thus justly understood, will not produce a deep impression. For my own part, I think it one of the very noblest works of sacred art ever produced in this or any other age.

It may, perhaps, be answered, that works of art ought not to stand in need of interpretation of this kind. Indeed, we have been so long accustomed to see pictures painted without any purpose or intention whatsoever, that the unexpected existence of meaning in a work of art may very naturally at first appear to us an unkind demand on the spectator's understanding. But in a few years more I hope the English public may be convinced of the simple truth, that neither a great fact, nor a great man, nor a great poem, nor a great picture, nor any other great thing, can be fathomed to the very bottom in a moment of time ; and that no high enjoyment, either in picture-seeing or any other occupation, is consistent with a total lethargy of the powers of the understanding.

As far as regards the technical qualities of Mr. Hunt's painting, I would only ask the spectator to observe this difference between true *præ-Raphaelite* work and its imitations. The true work represents all objects exactly as they would appear in nature in the position and at the distances which the arrangement of the picture supposes. The false work represents them with all their details, as if seen through a microscope. Examine closely the ivy on the door in Mr. Hunt's picture, and there will not be found in it a single clear outline. All is the most exquisite mystery of color ; becoming reality at its due distance. In like manner examine the small gems on the robe of the figure. Not one will be made out in form, and yet there is not one of all those minute points of green color, but it has two or three distinctly varied shades of green in it, giving it mysterious value and lustre.

The spurious imitations of *præ-Raphaelite* work represent the most minute leaves and other objects with sharp outlines, but with no variety of color, and with none of the conceal-

ment, none of the infinity of nature. With this spurious work the walls of the Academy are half covered ; of the true school one very small example may be pointed out, being hung so low that it might otherwise escape attention. It is not by any means perfect, but still very lovely—the study of a calm pool in a mountain brook, by Mr. J. Dearle, No. 191, “Evening, on the Marchno, North Wales.”¹

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR OF “MODERN PAINTERS.”

DENMARK HILL, *May 4.*

[From “The Times,” May 25, 1854.]

“THE AWAKENING CONSCIENCE.”

By HOLMAN HUNT.

To the Editor of “The Times.”

SIR: Your kind insertion of my notes on Mr. Hunt’s principal picture encourages me to hope that you may yet allow me room in your columns for a few words respecting his second work in the Royal Academy, the “Awakening Conscience.” Not that this picture is obscure, or its story feebly told. I am at a loss to know how its meaning could be rendered more distinctly, but assuredly it is not understood. People gaze at it in a blank wonder, and leave it hopelessly ; so that, though it is almost an insult to the painter to explain his thoughts in this instance, I cannot persuade myself to leave it thus misunderstood. The poor girl has been sitting singing with her seducer ; some chance words of the song, “Oft in the stilly night,” have struck upon the numbed places of her heart ; she has started up in agony ; he, not seeing her face,

¹ Mr. Dearle informs me that this picture was bought from the walls of the Academy by a prize-holder in the Art Union of London. He adds that the purchaser resided in either America or Australia, and that the picture is now, therefore, presumably in one or other of those countries.

goes on singing, striking the keys carelessly with his gloved hand.

I suppose that no one possessing the slightest knowledge of expression could remain untouched by the countenance of the lost girl, rent from its beauty into sudden horror ; the lips half open, indistinct in their purple quivering ; the teeth set hard ; the eyes filled with the fearful light of futurity, and with tears of ancient days. But I can easily understand that to many persons the careful rendering of the inferior details in this picture cannot but be at first offensive, as calling their attention away from the principle subject. It is true that detail of this kind has long been so carelessly rendered, that the perfect finishing of it becomes a matter of curiosity, and therefore an interruption to serious thought. But, without entering into the question of the general propriety of such treatment, I would only observe that, at least in this instance, it is based on a truer principle of the pathetic than any of the common artistical expedients of the schools. Nothing is more notable than the way in which even the most trivial objects force themselves upon the attention of a mind which has been fevered by violent and distressful excitement. They thrust themselves forward with a ghastly and unendurable distinctness, as if they would compel the sufferer to count, or measure, or learn them by heart. Even to the mere spectator a strange interest exalts the accessories of a scene in which he bears witness to human sorrow. There is not a single object in all that room—common, modern, vulgar (in the vulgar sense, as it may be), but it becomes tragical, if rightly read. That furniture so carefully painted, even to the last vein of the rosewood—is there nothing to be learnt from that terrible lustre of it, from its fatal newness ; nothing there that has the old thoughts of home upon it, or that is ever to become a part of home ? Those embossed books, vain and useless,—they also new,—marked with no happy wearing of beloved leaves ; the torn and dying bird upon the floor ; the gilded tapestry, with the fowls of the air feeding on the ripened corn ; the picture above the fireplace, with its single drooping figure—the woman taken in adultery ; nay, the very hem of the

poor girl's dress, at which the painter has labored so closely, thread by thread, has story in it, if we think how soon its pure whiteness may be soiled with dust and rain, her outcast feet failing in the street; and the fair garden flowers, seen in that reflected sunshine of the mirror—these also have their language—

“Hope not to find delight in us, they say,
For we are spotless, Jessie—we are pure.”¹

I surely need not go on. Examine the whole range of the walls of the Academy,—nay, examine those of all our public and private galleries,—and while pictures will be met with by the thousand which literally tempt to evil, by the thousand which are directed to the meanest trivialities of incident or emotion, by the thousand to the delicate fancies of inactive religion, there will not be found one powerful as this to meet full in the front the moral evil of the age in which it is painted; to waken into mercy the cruel thoughtlessness of youth, and subdue the severities of judgment into the sanctity of compassion.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR OF “MODERN PAINTERS.”

DENMARK HILL.

[From “The Liverpool Albion,” January 11, 1858.]

PRE-RAPHAELITISM IN LIVERPOOL.²

I BELIEVE the Liverpool Academy has, in its decisions of late years, given almost the first instance on record of the entirely just and beneficial working of academical system. Usually

¹ Shenstone: *Elegy* xxvi. The subject of the poem is that of the picture described here. The girl speaks—

“If through the garden's flowery tribes I stray,
Where bloom the jasmynes that could once allure,
Hope not,” etc.

² The prize of the Liverpool Academy was awarded in 1858 to Millais's *Blind Girl*. Popular feeling, however, favored another picture, the *Waiting for the Verdict* of A. Solomon, and a good deal of discussion

such systems have degenerated into the application of formal rules, or the giving partial votes, or the distribution of a partial patronage ; but the Liverpool awards have indicated at once the keen perception of new forms of excellence, and the frank honesty by which alone such new forms can be confessed and accepted. I do not, however, wonder at the outcry. People who suppose the pre-Raphaelite work to be only a condition of meritorious eccentricity, naturally suppose, also, that the consistent preference of it can only be owing to clique. Most people look upon paintings as they do on plants or minerals, and think they ought to have in their collections specimens of everybody's work, as they have specimens of all earths or flowers. They have no conception that there is such a thing as a real right and wrong, a real bad and good, in the question. However, you need not, I think, much mind. Let the Academy be broken up on the quarrel ; let the Liverpool people buy whatever rubbish they have a mind to ; and when they see, as in time they will, that it is rubbish, and find, as find they will, every pre-Raphaelite picture gradually advance in influence and in value, you will be acknowledged to have borne a witness all the more noble and useful, because it seemed to end in discomfiture ; though it will *not* end in discomfiture. I suppose I need hardly say anything of my own estimate of the two pictures on which the arbitrament has arisen. I have surely said often enough, in good black type already, what I thought of pre-Raphaelite works, and of other modern ones. Since Turner's death I consider that any average work from the hand of any of the four leaders of pre-Raphaelitism (Rossetti, Millais, Hunt, John Lewis) is, singly, worth at least *three* of any other pictures whatever by living artists.

JOHN RUSKIN.

arose as to whether the prize had been rightly awarded. As one of the judges, and as a member of the Academy, Mr. Alfred Hunt addressed a letter on the matter to Mr. Ruskin, the main portion of whose reply was sent by him to the Liverpool Albion and is now reprinted here. Mr. Solomon's picture had been exhibited in the Royal Academy of 1857 (No. 562), and is mentioned in Mr. Ruskin's *Notes to the pictures of that year* (p. 32).

[From "The Witness" (Edinburgh), March 27, 1858.]

GENERALIZATION AND THE SCOTCH PRE-RAPHAELITES.

To the Editor of the "Witness."

I was very glad to see that good and firm defence of the pre-Raphaelite Brothers in the *Witness* ' the other day ; only my dear Editor, it appears to me that you take too much trouble in the matter. Such a lovely picture as that of Waller Paton's must either speak for itself, or nobody can speak for it. If you Scotch people don't know a bit of your own country when you see it, who is to help you to know it? If, in that mighty wise town of Edinburgh, everybody still likes flourishes of brush better than ferns, and dots of paint better than birch leaves, surely there is nothing for it but to leave them in quietude of devotion to dot and faith in flourish. At least I can see no other way of dealing. All those platitudes from the *Scotsman*, which you took the pains to answer, have been answered ten thousand times already, without the smallest effect—the kind of people who utter them being always too misty in their notions ever to feel or catch an answer. You may as well speak to the air, or rather to a Scotch mist. The oddest part of the business is, that all those wretched fallacies about generalization might be quashed or crushed in an instant, by reference to any given picture of any great master who ever lived. There never was anybody who generalized, since paint was first ground, except Opie, and Benjamin West, and Fuseli, and one or two other such modern stars—in their own estimates,—night-lights, in fact, extinguishing themselves, not odoriferously at daybreak, in a sputter in the saucer. Titian, Giorgione, Veronese, Tintoret, Raphael, Leonardo, Correggio—never any of them dreamt of

'The defence was made in a second notice (March 6, 1858) of the Exhibition of the Royal Scottish Academy, then open to the public. The picture of Mr. Waller Paton (now R. S. A.) alluded to here was entitled *Wild Water Inveruglass* (161); he also exhibited one of *Arrochar Road, Tarbet* (314). The platitudes of the *Scotsman* against the pre-Raphaelites were contained in its second notice of the Exhibition (February 20, 1858).

generalization, and would have rejected the dream as having come by the horn gate,¹ if they had. The only difference between them and the pre-Raphaelites is, that the latter love nature better, and don't yet know their artist's business so well, having everything to find out for themselves athwart all sorts of contradiction, poor fellows ; so they are apt to put too much into their pictures—for love's sake, and then not to bring this much into perfect harmony ; not yet being able to bridle their thoughts entirely with the master's hand. I don't say therefore—I never have said—that their pictures are faultless—many of them have gross faults ; but the modern pictures of the generalist school, which are opposed to them, have nothing else but faults : they are not pictures at all, but pure daubs and perfect blunders ; nay, they have never had aim enough to be called anything so honorable as blunders ; they are mere emptinesses and idlenesses—thistledown without seeds, and bubbles without color ; whereas the worst pre-Raphaelite picture has something *in* it ; and the great ones, such as Windus's "Burd Helen,"² will hold their own with the most noble pictures of all time.

Always faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

¹ There must be some error here, as it is the *true* dreams that come through the horn gate, while the fruitless ones pass through the gate of *ivory*. The allusion is to Homer (*Odyssey*, xix. 562).

² In illustration of the old Scottish ballad of "Burd Helen," who, fearing her lover's desertion, followed him, dressed as a foot-page, through flood, if not through fire—

"Lord John he rode, Burd Helen ran,
The live-lang sumer's day,
Until they cam' to Clyde's Water,
Was filled frae bank to brae.

"'See'st thou yon water, Helen,' quoth he,
'That flows frae bank to brim?'
'I trust to God, Lord John,' she said,
'You ne'er will see me swim.'"

This picture (No. 141 in the Edinburgh Exhibition of 1858) was first exhibited in the Royal Academy of 1856. In the postscript to his Academy Notes of that year, Mr. Ruskin, after commenting on the

By the way, what ails you at our pre-Raphaelite Brothers' conceits? Windus's heart's-ease might have been a better conceit, I grant you; ' but for the conceits themselves, as such, I always enjoy them particularly; and I don't understand why I shouldn't. What's wrong in them?

"crying error of putting it nearly out of sight," so that he had at first hardly noticed it, estimates this picture as second only to the Autumn Leaves of Mr. Millais in that exhibition. The following is a portion of his comment on it: "I see just enough of the figures to make me sure that the work is thoughtful and intense in the highest degree. The pressure of the girl's hand on her side; her wild, calm, firm, desolate look at the stream—she not raising her eyes as she makes her appeal, for fear of the greater mercilessness in the human look than in the glaze of the gliding water—the just choice of the type of the rider's cruel face, and of the scene itself—so terrible in haggardness of rattling stones and ragged heath,—are all marks of the action of the very grandest imaginative power, shortened only of hold upon our feelings, because dealing with a subject too fearful to be for a moment believed true."

The picture was originally purchased by Mr. John Miller, of Liverpool; at the sale of whose collection by Christie and Manson, two years later, in 1858, it fetched the price of two hundred guineas. At the same sale the *Blind Girl*, alluded to in the previous letter, was sold for three hundred.

For the poem illustrated by the picture, see Aytoun's *Ballads of Scotland*, i. 239, where a slightly different version of it is given: it may also be found in Percy's *Reliques* (vol. iii. p. 59), under the title of *Child Waters*. Other versions of this ballad, and other ballads of the same name, and probable origin may be found in Jameson's collection, vol. i. p. 117, vol. ii. p. 376, in Buchan's *Ancient Ballads of the North*, ii. 29 (1879 ed.) and in *Four Books of Scottish Ballads*, Edin., 1868, Bk. ii. p. 21, where it is well noted that "*Burd Helen*" corresponds to the *Proud Elise* of northern minstrels, "*La Prude Dame Elise*" of the French, and the "*Gentle Lady Elise*" of the English—(*Burd, Prud, Preux*). It is also possible that it is a corruption of *Burdalayn*, or *Burdalane*, meaning an only child, a maiden, etc.

'The Witness had objected to the "astonishing fondness" of the pre-Raphaelite school for "conceits," instancing as typically far-fetched that in the picture of "*Burd Helen*," where the Lord John was represented "pulling to pieces a heart's-ease," as he crosses the stream.

IV.—TURNER.

[From "The Times," October 28, 1856.]

THE TURNER BEQUEST.

To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR: As active measures are being now¹ taken to give the public access to the pictures and drawings left by the late Mr. Turner, you will perhaps allow me space in your columns for a few words respecting them.

I was appointed by Mr. Turner one of his executors. I examined the will, and the state of the property needing administration, and, finding that the questions arising out of the obscurity of the one and the disorder of the other would be numerous and would involve a kind of business in which I had no skill or knowledge, I resigned the office; but in the course of the inquiry I catalogued the most interesting of the drawings which are now national property, and respecting these the public will, I think, be glad of more definite information than they at present possess. They are referable mainly to three classes.

1. Finished water-color drawings.
2. Studies from nature, or first thoughts for pictures; in color.
3. Sketches in pencil or pen and ink.

The drawings belonging to the two latter classes are in various stages of completion, and would contain, if rightly arranged, a perfect record of the movements of the master's mind during his whole life. Many of them were so confused among prints and waste-paper that I could neither collect nor catalogue them all in the time I had at my disposal; some portfolios I was not able even to open. The following state-

¹ The first exhibition of Turner's pictures after his death was opened at Marlborough House early in November, 1856, seven months subsequent to the final decision as to the proper distribution of the property, which was the subject of Turner's will.

ment, therefore, omits mention of many, and I believe even of some large water-color drawings. There are in the first class forty-five drawings of the "Rivers of France;" fifty-seven illustrating Rogers' Poems; twenty-three of the "River Scenery" and "Harbors of England;" four marine vignettes; five middle-sized drawings (including the beautiful "Ivy Bridge"); and a drawing, some three feet by two, finished with exquisite care, of a scene in the Val d'Aosta; total, 135.

It would occupy too much of your space if I were to specify all the various kinds of studies forming the second class. Many are far carried, and are, to my mind, more precious and lovely than any finished drawings; respecting some, there may be question whether Turner regarded them as finished or not. The larger number are light sketches, valuable only to artists, or to those interested in the processes of Turner's mind and hand. The total number of those which I catalogued as important is 1,757.

The sketches of the third class are usually more elaborate than the colored ones. They consist of studies from nature, or for composition, in firm outline, usually on gray paper, heightened with white. They include, among other subjects, more or less complete, fifty of the original drawings for the *Liber Studiorum*, and many of the others are of large folio size. The total of those I consider important is 1,322. Now the value of these sketches to the public consist greatly, first, in the preservation of each, as far as possible, in the state in which Turner left it; secondly, in their careful arrangement and explanation; thirdly, in convenience of general access to them. Permit me a word on each of these heads.

Turner was in the habit of using unusual vehicles, and in the colored studies many hues are wrought out by singular means and with singular delicacy—nearly always in textures which the slightest damp (to which the drawings would necessarily be subjected in the process of mounting) would assuredly alter. I have made many experiments in mounting, putting colored drawings, of which I had previously examined the tones, into the hands of the best mounters, and I have never yet had a drawing returned to me without alteration.

The vast mass of these sketches, and the comparative slightness of many, would but too probably induce a carelessness and generalization in the treatment they might have to undergo still more fatally detrimental to them.

Secondly, a large number are without names, and so slight that it requires careful examination and somewhat extended acquaintance with Turner's works to ascertain their intention. The sketches of this class are nearly valueless, till their meaning is deciphered, but of great interest when seen in their proper connection. Thus there are three progressive studies for one vignette in *Rogers' Italy*¹ (Hannibal passing the Alps), which I extricated from three several heaps of other mountain sketches with which they had no connection. Thirdly, a large number of the drawings are executed with body color, the bloom of which any friction or handling would in a short period destroy. Their delicate tones of color would be equally destroyed by continuous exposure to the light or to smoke and dust.

Drawings of a valuable character, when thus destructible, are in European museums hardly accessible to the general public. But there is no need for this seclusion. They should be inclosed each in a light wooden frame, under a glass the surface of which a raised mount should prevent them from touching. These frames should slide into cases containing about twelve drawings each, which would be portable to any part of the room where they were to be seen. I have long kept my own smaller Turner drawings in this manner; fifteen frames going into the depth of about a foot. Men are usually accused of "bad taste," if they express any conviction of their own ability to execute any given work. But it would perhaps be better if in people's sayings in general, whether concerning others or themselves, there were less taste, and more truth; and I think it, under the circumstances, my duty to state that I believe none would treat these drawings with more scrupulous care, or arrange them with greater patience, than I should myself; that I am ready to undertake the task, and enter upon

¹ See *Rogers' Italy*, p. 29.

it instantly ; that I will furnish, in order to prove the working of the system proposed, a hundred of the frames, with their cases, at my own cost ; and that within six weeks of the day on which I am permitted to begin work (illness or accident not interfering), I will have the hundred drawings arranged, framed, accompanied by a printed explanatory catalogue, and ready for public inspection. It would then be in the power of the commissioners intrusted with the administration of this portion of the national property to decide if any, or how many more of the sketches, should be exhibited in the same manner, as a large mass of the less interesting ones might be kept as the drawings are at the British Museum, and shown only on special inquiry.

I will only undertake this task on condition of the entire management of the drawings, in every particular, being intrusted to me ; but I should ask the advice of Mr. Carpenter, of the British Museum,¹ on all doubtful points, and intrust any necessary operations only to the person who mounts the drawings for the British Museum.

I make this offer² in your columns rather than privately,

¹ William Hookham Carpenter, for many years Keeper of the prints and drawings at the British Museum. He died in 1866.

² Mr. Ruskin's offer was accepted, and he eventually arranged the drawings, and, in particular, the four hundred now exhibited in one of the lower rooms of the National Gallery, and contained in the kind of cases above proposed, presented by Mr. Ruskin to the Gallery. Mr. Ruskin also printed, as promised, a descriptive and explanatory catalogue of a hundred of these four hundred drawings. (Catalogue of the Turner Sketches in the National Gallery. For private circulation. Part I. 1857.—Only one hundred copies printed, and no further parts issued.)

Writing (1858) to Mr. Norton of his whole work in arranging the Turner drawings, Mr. Ruskin said: "To show you a little what my work has been, I have fac-similed for you, as nearly as I could, one of the nineteen thousand sketches (comprised in the Turner bequest). It, like most of them, is not a sketch, but a group of sketches, made on both sides of the leaf of the note-book. The note-books vary in contents from sixty to ninety leaves: there are about two hundred books of the kind—three hundred and odd note-books in all; and each leaf has on an average this quantity of work, a great many leaves being slighter,

first, because I wish it to be clearly known to the public ; and also because I have no time to make representations in official ways, the very hours which I could give to the work needing to be redeemed by allowing none to be wasted in formalities

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, Oct. 27.

[From "The Times," July 9, 1857.]

THE TURNER BEQUEST AND THE NATIONAL GALLERY.

To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR :—I am sorry that accident has prevented my seeing the debate of Friday last¹ on the vote for the National Gallery until to-day. Will you permit me, thus late, to correct the statement made by Lord Elcho, that I offered to arrange Turner's pictures, or could have done so as well as Mr. Wornum?² I only offered to arrange the sketches, and that I am doing ; but I never would have undertaken the pictures, which were in such a state of decay that I had given up many for lost ; while, also, most of them belonged to periods of Turner's work with which I was little acquainted. Mr. Wornum's patience and carefulness of research in discovering their subjects, dates of exhibition, and other points of interest connected with them, have been of the greatest service ; and it will be long

some blank, but a great many also elaborate in the highest degree, some containing ten exquisite compositions on each side of the leaf, thus (see facsimile), each no bigger than this—and with about that quantity of work in each, but every touch of it inestimable, done with his whole soul in it. Generally the slighter sketches are written over it everywhere, as in the example inclosed, every incident being noted that was going on at the moment of the sketch."—List of Turner's Drawings shown in connection with Mr. Norton's Lectures. Boston : 1874. p. 11. The facsimile alluded to by Mr. Norton is reproduced opposite.

¹ July 3, 1857, upon the vote of £23,165 for the National Gallery.

² The late Mr. Ralph Nicholson Wornum, who succeeded Mr. Uwins as Keeper of the National Gallery in 1855, and retained that office till his death in 1878.

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being lighter - some blanks but
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and with about that quantity of
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the sketch.

before the labor and judgment which he has shown in compiling, not only this, but all the various catalogues now used by the public at our galleries, will be at all justly appreciated. I find more real, serviceable, and trustworthy facts in one of these catalogues, than in half a dozen of the common collections of lives of painters.

Permit me to add further, that during long residence in Venice I have carefully examined the Paul Veronese lately purchased by the Government.¹ When I last saw it, it was simply the best Veronese in Italy, if not in Europe (the "Marriage in Cana" of the Louvre is larger and more magnificent, but not so perfect in finish); and, for my own part, I should think no price too large for it; but putting my own deep reverence for the painter wholly out of the question, and considering the matter as it will appear to the most persons at all acquainted with the real character and range of Venetian work, I believe the market value of the picture ought to be estimated at perhaps one-third more than the Government have paid for it. Without doubt the price of the Murillo lately purchased at Paris was much enhanced by accidental competition; under ordinary circumstances, and putting both the pictures to a fair trial of market value, I believe the Ver-

¹ The Family of Darius at the feet of Alexander after the Battle of Issus, purchased at Venice from the Pisani collection in 1857. Lord Elcho had complained in the course of the debate that the price, £13,650, paid for this picture, had been excessive; and in reply allusion was made to the still higher price (£23,000) paid for the Immaculate Conception of Murillo, purchased for the Louvre by Napoleon III., in 1852, from the collection of Marshal Soult. Of the great Veronese, Mr. Ruskin also wrote thus: "It at once, to my mind, raises our National Gallery from a second-rate to a first-rate collection. I have always loved the master, and given much time to the study of his works, but this is the best I have ever seen." (Turner Notes, 1857, ed. v. p. 89, note.) So again before the National Gallery Commission, earlier in the same year, he had said, "I am rejoiced to hear (of its rumored purchase). If it is confirmed, nothing will have given me such pleasure for a long time. I think it is the most precious Paul Veronese in the world, as far as the completeness of the picture goes, and quite a priceless picture."

onese to be worth at least double the Murillo ; in an artistical point of view, the latter picture could not be put in any kind of comparison whatever with the Veronese.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. RUSKIN.

OXFORD, July 7.

[From "The Literary Gazette," November 13, 1858—partly reprinted in "The Two Paths," Appendix iv.]

*THE TURNER SKETCHES AND DRAWINGS.*¹

To the Editor of "The Literary Gazette."

SIR: I do not think it generally necessary to answer criticism ; yet as yours is the first sufficient notice which has been taken of the important collection of sketches at Marlborough House, and as your strictures on the arrangement proposed for the body of the collection, as well as on some statements in my catalogue, are made with such candor and good feeling, will you allow me to offer one or two observations in reply to them ? The mode of arrangement to which you refer as determined on by the trustees has been adopted, not to discourage the study of the drawings by the public, but to put all more completely at their service. Drawings so small in size and so delicate in execution cannot be seen, far less copied, when hung on walls. As now arranged, they can be put into the hands of each visitor, or student, as a book is into those of a reader ; he may examine them in any light, or in any position, and copy them at his ease. The students who work from drawings exhibited on walls will, I am sure, bear willing witness to the greater convenience of the new system.

¹ The present letter was written in reply to a criticism, contained in the *Literary Gazette* of November 6, 1858, on Mr. Ruskin's Catalogue of the Turner Sketches and Drawings exhibited at Marlborough House 1857-8. The subjects of complaint made by the *Gazette* sufficiently appear from this letter. They were, briefly, first, the mode of exhibition of the Turner Drawings proposed by Mr. Ruskin in his official report already alluded to, pp. 84 and 88. note ; and, secondly, two alleged hyperboles and one omission in the Catalogue itself.

Four hundred drawings are already thus arranged for public use ; framed, and disposed in eighty portable boxes, each containing five sketches, so that eighty students might at once be supplied with five drawings apiece. The oil paintings at Marlborough House, comprising as they do the most splendid works which Turner ever produced, and the 339 drawings exhibited beside them, are surely enough for the amusement of loungers—for do you consider as anything better than loungers those persons who do not care enough for the Turner drawings to be at the trouble of applying for a ticket of admission, and entering their names in a book—that is to say, who will not, to obtain the privilege of quiet study of perfect art, take, once for all, as much trouble as would be necessary to register a letter, or book, or parcel ?

I entirely waive for the moment the question of exposure to light. I put the whole issue on the ground of greatest public convenience. I believe it to be better for the public to have two collections of Turner's drawings than one ; nay, it seems to me just the perfection of all privilege to have one gallery for quiet, another for disquiet ; one into which the curious, idle, or speculative may crowd on wet or weary days, and another in which people desirous of either thinking or working seriously may always find peace, light, and elbow-room. I believe, therefore, that the present disposition of these drawings will be at once the most convenient and the most just, even supposing that the finest works of Turner would not be injured by constant exposure. But that they would be so admits of no debate. It is not on my judgment nor on any other unsupported opinion, that the trustees have acted, but in consideration of facts now universally admitted by persons who have charge of drawings. You will find that the officers both of the Louvre and of the British Museum refuse to expose their best drawings or missal-pages to light, in consequence of ascertained damage received by such drawings as have been already exposed ; and among the works of Turner I am prepared to name an example in which, the frame having protected a portion while the rest was exposed, the covered portion is still rich and lovely in colors, while the

exposed spaces are reduced in some parts nearly to white paper, and the color in general to a dull brown.

You allude to the contrary chance that some hues may be injured by darkness. I believe that some colors are indeed liable to darken in perpetual shade, but not while occasionally exposed to moderate light, as these drawings will be in daily use ; nor is any liability to injury, even by perpetual shade, as yet demonstrable with respect to the Turner drawings ; on the contrary, those which now form the great body of the national collection were never out of Turner's house until his death, and were all kept by him in tight bundles or in clasped books ; and all the drawings so kept are in magnificent preservation, appearing as if they had just been executed, while every one of those which have been in the possession of purchasers and exposed in frames are now faded in proportion to the time and degree of their exposure ; the lighter hues disappearing, especially from the skies, so as sometimes to leave hardly a trace of the cloud-forms. For instance, the great Yorkshire series is, generally speaking, merely the wreck of what it once was.* That water-colors are not injured by darkness is also sufficiently proved by the exquisite preservation of missal paintings, when the books containing them have been little used. Observe, then, you have simply this question to put to the public : "Will you have your Turner drawings to look at when you are at leisure, in a comfortable room, under such limitations as will preserve them to you forever, or will you make an amusing exhibition of them (*if* amusing, which I doubt) for children and nursery-maids ; dry your wet coats by them, and shake off the dust from your feet upon them, for a score or two of years, and then send them to the waste-paper merchant ?" That is the simple question ; answer it, for the public, as you think best.

Permit me to observe farther, that the small interest manifested in the existing Turner collection at Marlborough House does not seem to justify any further effort at exhibition.

* The cloud-forms which have disappeared from the drawings may be seen in the engravings.

There are already more paintings and drawings placed in those rooms than could be examined properly in years of labor. But how placed? Thrust into dark corners, nailed on spare spaces of shutters, backs of doors, and tottering elongations of screens; hung with their faces to the light, or with their backs to the light, or with their sides to the light, so that it "rakes" them (I use an excellent expression of Sir Charles Eastlake's), throwing every irregularity of surface into view as if they were maps in relief of hill countries; hung, in fine, in every conceivable mode that can exhibit their faults, or conceal their meaning, or degrade their beauty. Neither Mr. Wornum nor I are answerable for this; we have both done the best we could under the circumstances; the public are answerable for it, who suffer such things without care and without remonstrance. If they want to derive real advantage from the treasures they possess, let them show some regard for them, and build, or at least express some desire to get built, a proper gallery for them. I see no way at present out of the embarrassments which exist respecting the disposition of the entire national collection; but the Turner gallery was intended by Turner himself to be a distinct one, and there is no reason why a noble building should not be at once provided for it. Place the oil pictures now at Marlborough House in beautiful rooms, each in a light fit and sufficient for it, and all on a level with the eye; range them in chronological order; place the sketches at present exhibited, also in chronological order, in a lateral gallery; let illustrative engravings and explanations be put in cases near them; furnish the room richly and gracefully, as the Louvre is furnished, and I do not think the public would any longer complain of not having enough to amuse them on rainy days.

That we ought to do as much for our whole national collection is as certain as that we shall not do it for many a year to come, nor until we have wasted twice as much money as would do it nobly in vain experiments on a mean scale. I have no immediate hope in this matter, else I might perhaps ask you to let me occupy your columns with some repetition, in other words (such repetition being apparently always

needed in these talking days), of what I have already stated in the Appendix to my Notes on the oil-pictures¹ at Marlborough House. But I will only, being as I say hopeless in the matter, ask you for room for a single sentence.

"If ever we come to understand that the function of a picture, after all, with respect to mankind, is not merely to be bought, but to be seen, it will follow that a picture which deserves a price deserves a place; and that all paintings which are worth keeping, are worth, also, the rent of so much wall as shall be necessary to show them to the best advantage, and in the least fatiguing way for the spectator.

"It would be interesting if we could obtain a return of the sum which the English nation pays annually for park walls to inclose game, stable walls to separate horses, and garden walls to ripen peaches; and if we could compare this ascertained sum with what it pays for walls to show its art upon."

I ask you to reprint this, because the fact is that if either Mr. Wornum at the National Gallery, or Mr. Carpenter at the British Museum, had as much well-lighted wall at their disposal as most gentlemen's gardeners have, they could each furnish the public with art enough to keep them gazing from one year's end to another's. Mr. Carpenter has already made a gallant effort with some screens in a dark room; but in the National Gallery, whatever mode of exhibition may be determined upon for the four hundred framed drawings, the great mass of the Turner sketches (about fifteen thousand, without counting mere color memoranda) must lie packed in parcels in tin cases, simply for want of room to show them. It is true that many of these are quite slight, and would be interesting to none but artists. There are, however, upwards of five thousand sketches in pencil outline,* which are just as inter-

¹ "Notes on the oil pictures," to be distinguished from the later catalogue of the Turner sketches and drawings with which this letter directly deals. See ante, p. 91, note.

* By the way, you really ought to have given me some credit for the swivel frames in the desks of Marlborough House.

esting as those now exhibited at Marlborough House ; and which might be constantly exhibited, like those, without any harm, if there were only walls to put them on.

I have already occupied much of your space. I do not say too much, considering the importance of the subject, but ¹ I must [with more diffidence] ask you to allow me yet leave to reply to the objections you make to two statements [and to one omission] in my Catalogue, as those objections would otherwise diminish its usefulness. I have asserted that in a given drawing (named as one of the chief in the series), Turner's pencil did not move over the thousandth of an inch without meaning ; and you charge this expression with extravagant hyperbole. On the contrary, it is much within the truth, being merely a mathematically accurate description of fairly good execution in either drawing or engraving. It is only necessary to measure a piece of any ordinarily good work to ascertain this. Take, for instance, Finden's engraving at the 180th page of Rogers' poems,² in which the face of the figure, from the chin to the top of the brow, occupies just a quarter of an inch, and the space between the upper lip and chin as nearly as possible one-seventeenth of an inch. The whole mouth occupies one-third of this space, say, one-fiftieth of an inch ; and within that space both the lips and the much more difficult inner corner of the mouth are perfectly drawn and rounded, with quite successful and sufficiently subtle ex-

which enable the public, however rough-handed, to see the drawings on both sides of the same leaf.³

¹ The identical frames, each containing examples of the sketches in pencil outline to which the letter alludes, may be seen in the windows of the lower rooms of the National Gallery, now devoted to the exhibition of the Turner drawings.

² The rest of this letter may, with the exception of its two last paragraphs, and the slight alterations noted, be also found in *The Two Paths*, Appendix iv., *Subtlety of Hand* (pp. 228-9 of the now, and pp. 263-6 of the original edition), where the words bracketed [sic] in this reprint of it are, it will be seen, omitted.

³ From a vignette design by Stothard of a single figure, to illustrate the poem *On a Tear*. (Rogers' *Poems*, London, 1834 ed.)

pression. Any artist will assure you, that in order to draw a mouth as well as this, there must be more than twenty gradations of shade in the touches ; that is to say, in this case, gradations changing, with meaning, within less than the thousandth of an inch.

But this is mere child's play compared to the refinement of any first-rate mechanical work, much more of brush or pencil drawing by a master's hand. In order at once to furnish you with authoritative evidence on this point, I wrote to Mr. Kingsley, tutor of Sidney-Sussex College, a friend to whom I always have recourse when I want to be precisely right in any matter ; for his great knowledge both of mathematics and of natural science is joined, not only with singular powers of delicate experimental manipulation, but with a keen sensitiveness to beauty in art. His answer, in its final statement respecting Turner's work, is amazing even to me ; and will, I should think, be more so to your readers. Observe the successions of measured and tested refinement ; here is No. 1 :

"The finest mechanical work that I know of is that done by Nobert in the way of ruling lines. I have a series of lines ruled by him on glass, giving actual scales from .000024 and .000016 of an inch, perfectly correct to these places of decimals ; [*] and he has executed others as fine as .000012, though I do not know how far he could repeat these last with accuracy."

This is No. 1, of precision. Mr. Kingsley proceeds to No. 2 :

"But this is rude work compared to the accuracy necessary for the construction of the object glass of a microscope such as Rosse turns out."

I am sorry to omit the explanation which follows of the ten lenses composing such a glass, "each of which must be exact in radius and in surface, and all have their axes coinci-

[* That is to say, accurate in measures estimated in *millionths* of inches.]

dent ; " but it would not be intelligible without the figure by which it is illustrated, so I pass to Mr. Kingsley's No. 3 :

"I am tolerably familiar," he proceeds, "with the actual grinding and polishing of lenses and specula, and have produced by my own hands some by no means bad optical work ; and I have copied no small amount of Turner's work, and I still look with awe at the combined delicacy and precision of his hand ; *it beats optical work out of sight.*"¹ In optical work, as in refined drawing, the hand goes beyond the eye, [*] and one has to depend upon the feel ; and when one has once learned what a delicate affair touch is, one gets a horror of all coarse work, and is ready to forgive any amount of feebleness, sooner than the boldness which is akin to impudence. In optics the distinction is easily seen when the work is put to trial ; but here too, as in drawing, it requires an educated eye to tell the difference when the work is only moderately bad ; but with 'bold' work nothing can be seen but distortion and fog, and I heartily wish the same result would follow the same kind of handling in drawing ; but here, the boldness cheats the unlearned by looking like the precision of the true man. It is very strange how much better our ears are than our eyes in this country : if an ignorant man were to be 'bold' with a violin, he would not get many admirers, though his boldness was far below that of ninety-nine out of a hundred drawings one sees."

The words which I have italicized² in the above extract are those which were surprising to me. I knew that Turner's

[* In case any of your readers should question the use, in drawing of work too fine for the touches to be individually, I quote a sentence from my *Elements of Drawing*.³ "*All fine coloring, like fine drawing, is delicate ; so delicate, that if at last you see the color you are putting on, you are putting on too much. You ought to feel a change wrought in the general tone by touches which are individually too pale to be seen.*"]

¹ See the *Elements of Drawing*, Letter III. on Color and Composition, p. 132.

² Doubly emphasized in *The Two Paths*, where the words are printed thus : "*I still look with awe at the combined delicacy and precision of his hand ; IT BEATS OPTICAL WORK OUT OF SIGHT.*"

³ The *Two Paths* reprint has "put in italics."

was as refined as any optical work, but had no idea of its going beyond it. Mr. Kingsley's word "awe," occurring just before, is, however, as I have often felt, precisely the right one. When once we begin at all to understand the work of any truly great executor, such as that of any of the three great Venetians [(Tintoret, Titian, and Veronese)], Correggio, or Turner, the awe of it is something greater than can be felt from the most stupendous natural scenery. For the creation of such a system as a high human intelligence, endowed with its ineffably perfect instruments of eye and hand, is a far more appalling manifestation of Infinite Power than the making either of seas or mountains. After this testimony to the completion of Turner's work, I need not at length defend myself from the charge of hyperbole in the statement that, "as far as I know, the galleries of Europe may be challenged to produce one sketch¹ that shall equal the chalk study No. 45, or the feeblest of the memoranda in the 71st and following frames;"² which memoranda, however, it should have been observed, are stated at the forty-fourth page to be in some respects "the grandest work in gray that he did in his life."

For I believe that, as manipulators, none but the four men whom I have just named (the three Venetians and Correggio) were equal to Turner; and, as far as I know, none of these four men put their full strength into sketches. But whether they did or not, my statement in the Catalogue is limited by my own knowledge, and as far as I can trust that knowledge:

¹ The following note is here added to the reprint in *The Two Paths*: "A sketch, observe—not a printed drawing. Sketches are only proper subjects of comparison with each other when they contain about the same quantity of work: the test of their merit is the quantity of truth told with a given number of touches. The assertion in the Catalogue which this letter was written to defend was made respecting the sketch of Rome, No. 101."

² No. 45 was a Study of a Cutter. Mr. Ruskin's note to it in the Catalogue is partly as follows: "I have never seen any chalk sketch which for a moment could be compared with this for soul and power. . . . I should think that the power of it would be felt by most people; but if not, let those who do not feel its strength, try to copy it." See the Catalogue under No. 45, as also under No. 71, referred to above.

it is not an enthusiastic statement, but an entirely calm and considered one. It may be a mistake, but it is not an hyperbole.

Lastly, you object that the drawings for the "*Liber Studiorum*" are not included in my catalogue. They are not so, because I did not consider them as, in a true sense, drawings at all; they are merely washes of color laid roughly to guide the mezzotint engraver in his first process; the drawing, properly so called, was all put in by Turner when he etched the plates, or superadded by repeated touchings on the proofs. These brown "guides," for they are nothing more, are entirely unlike the painter's usual work, and in every way inferior to it; so that students wishing to understand the composition of the "*Liber*" must always work from the plates, and not from these first indications of purpose.¹ I have put good impressions of two of the plates in the same room, in order to show their superiority; and for the rest, thought it useless to increase the bulk of the Catalogue by naming subjects which have been published and well known these thirty years.²

Permit me, in conclusion, to thank you for drawing attention to the subject of this great national collection; and, again

¹ In a letter to Mr. Norton written in the same year as this one to the *Literary Gazette*, Mr. Ruskin thus speaks of the value of these plates: "Even those who know most of art may at first look be disappointed with the *Liber Studiorum*. For the nobleness of these designs is not more in what *is* done than in what *is not* done in them. Every touch in these plates is related to every other, and has no permission of withdrawn, monastic virtue, but is only good in its connection with the rest, and in that connection infinitely and inimitably good. The showing how each of these designs is connected by all manner of strange intellectual chords and nerves with the pathos and history of this old English country of our, and with the history of European mind from earliest mythology down to modern rationalism and irrationalism—all this was what I meant to try and show in my closing work; but long before that closing I felt it to be impossible."—Extract from a letter of Mr. Ruskin, 1858, quoted in the "List of Turner Drawings, etc." already mentioned, p. 19.

² The *Literary Gazette* of November 20, 1858, contains a reply to this letter, but as it did not provoke a further letter from Mr. Ruskin, it is not noticed in detail here.

asking your indulgence for trespassing so far upon your space,
to subscribe myself,

Very respectfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

[From "The Times," October 21, 1859.]

THE TURNER GALLERY AT KENSINGTON.¹

To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR: At the time of my departure for the Continent some months ago I had heard it was proposed to light the Turner Gallery, at Kensington, with gas; but I attached no importance to the rumor, feeling assured that a commission would be appointed on the subject, and that its decision would be adverse to the mode of exhibition suggested.

Such a commission has, I find been appointed; and has, contrary to my expectations, approved and confirmed the plan of lighting proposed.

It would be the merest presumption in me to expect weight to be attached to any opinion of mine, opposed to that of any one of the gentlemen who formed the commission; but as I was officially employed in some of the operations connected with the arrangement of the Turner Gallery at Marlborough House, and as it might therefore be supposed by the public that I at least concurred in recommending the measures now taken for exhibition of the Turner pictures in the evening, at Kensington, I must beg your permission to state in your columns that I take no share in the responsibility of lighting the pictures either of Reynolds or Turner with gas; that, on the contrary, my experience would lead me to apprehend serious injury to those pictures from such a measure; and that it is with profound regret that I have heard of its adoption.

¹ There was at the date of this and the following letter an exhibition of Turner drawings at the South Kensington Museum. These pictures have, however, been since removed to the National Gallery, and the only works of Turner now at Kensington, are some half a dozen oil paintings belonging to the Sheepshanks collection, and about the same number of water-color drawings, which form part of the historical series of British water-color paintings.

I specify the pictures of Reynolds and Turner, because the combinations of coloring material employed by both these painters are various, and to some extent unknown ; and also because the body of their colors shows peculiar liability to crack, and to detach itself from the canvas. I am glad to be able to bear testimony to the fitness of the gallery at Kensington, as far as could be expected under the circumstances, for the exhibition of the Turner pictures by daylight, as well as to the excellence of Mr. Wornum's chronological arrangement of them in the three principal rooms.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, Oct. 20.

P.S.—I wish the writer of the admirable and exhaustive letter which appeared in your columns of yesterday on the subject of Mr. Scott's design for the Foreign Office would allow me to know his name.¹

[From "The Daily Telegraph," July 5, 1876.]

TURNER'S DRAWINGS.

To the Editor of "*The Daily Telegraph*."

SIR : I am very heartily glad to see the subject of Turner's drawings brought more definitely before the public in your

¹ This refers to a letter signed "E. A. F." which appeared in *The Times* of October 19, 1859, advising the adoption of Mr. Gilbert Scott's Gothic design for the Foreign Office in preference to any Classic design. The writer entered at some length into the principles of Gothic and Classic architecture, which he briefly summed up in the last sentence of his letter: "Gothic, then, is national; it is constructively real; it is equally adapted to all sorts of buildings; it is convenient; it is cheap. In none of these does Italian surpass it; in most of them it is very inferior to it." See the letters on the Oxford Museum as to the adaptability of Gothic—included in Section vi. of these *Letters on Art*. With regard to the cheapness of Gothic, the correspondent of *The Times* had pointed out that while it may be cheap and yet thoroughly good so far as it goes, Italian *must* always be costly.

remarks on the recent debate¹ in Parliament. It is indeed highly desirable that these drawings should be made more accessible, and I will answer your reference to me by putting you in possession of all the facts which it is needful that the public should know or take into consideration respecting them, in either judging what has been hitherto done by those entrusted with their care, or taking measures for obtaining greater freedom in their use. Their *use*, I say, as distinguished from the mere pleasure of seeing them. This pleasure, to the general public, is very small indeed. You appear not to be aware that three hundred of the finest examples, including all the originals of the *Liber Studiorum*, were framed by myself, especially for the public, in the year 1858, and have been exhibited every day, and all day long, ever since in London. But the public never stops a moment in the room at Kensington where they hang; and the damp, filth, and gas (under the former management of that institution)* soiled their frames and warped the drawings, "by friend remembered not."

You have been also misinformed in supposing that "for some years these aquarelles were unreservedly shown, and in all the fulness of daylight." Only the "Seine" series (rivers of France), the rivers of England, the harbors of England, and the Rogers' vignettes (about a hundred drawings in all), were exhibited in the dark under-room of Marlborough House, and a few larger and smaller examples scattered up and down in the room of the National Gallery, including Fort Bard, Edin-

* Now I trust, under Mr. Poynter and Mr. Sparkes undergoing thorough reform.'

¹ Hardly a debate. Lord Francis Hervey had recently (June 30, 1876) put a question in the House of Commons to Lord Henry Lennox (First Commissioner of Works) as to whether it was the fact that many of Turner's drawings were at that time stowed in the cellars of the National Gallery, and had never been exhibited. The *Daily Telegraph* in a short article on the matter (July 1, 1876) appealed to Mr. Ruskin for his opinion on the exhibition of these drawings.

² Mr. Poynter, R.A., was then, as now, Director, and Mr. Sparkes Head Master, of the Art School at the South Kensington Museum.

burgh, and Ivy Bridge.¹ These drawings are all finished, most of them have been engraved; they were shown as the choicest of the collection, and there is no question but that they should always be perfectly accessible to the public. There are no other finished drawings in the vast mass of the remaining material for exhibition and means of education. But these are *all* the drawings which Turner made during his lifetime, in color, chalk, pencil, and ink, for his own study or delight; that is to say, pencil sketches to be counted by the thousand (how many thousands I cannot safely so much as guess), and assuredly upwards of two thousand colored studies, many of exquisite beauty; and all instructive as no other water-color work ever was before, or has been since: besides the ink and chalk studies for all his great Academy pictures.²

There are in this accumulation of drawings means of education in the noblest principles of elementary art and in the most accomplished science of color for every drawing-school in England, were they properly distributed. Besides these, there are the three hundred chosen drawings already named, now at Kensington, and about two hundred more of equal value, now in the lower rooms of the National Gallery, which the Trustees permitted me to choose out of the mass, and frame for general service.

They are framed as I frame exercise-drawings at Oxford, for my own schools. They are, when in use, perfectly secure from dust and all other sources of injury; slide, when done with, into portable cabinets; are never exposed to light, but when they are being really looked at; and can be examined at his ease, measured, turned in whatever light he likes, by

¹ For notes of these drawings see the Catalogue of the Turner Sketches and Drawings already mentioned—(a) *The Battle of Fort Bard, Val d'Aosta*, p. 32; (b) *the Edinburgh*, p. 30 and (c) *the Ivy Bridge, Devon*, p. 32.

² I have omitted to add to my note (p. 84) on Mr. Ruskin's arrangement of the Turner drawings a reference to his own account of the labor which that arrangement involved, and of the condition in which he found the vast mass of the sketches. See *Modern Painters*, vol. v., Preface, p. vi.

every student or amateur who takes the smallest interest in them. But it is necessary, for this mode of exhibition, that there should be trustworthy persons in charge of the drawings, as of the MSS. in the British Museum, and that there should be attendants in observation, as in the Print Room of the Museum, that glasses may not be broken, or drawings taken out of the frames.

Thus taken care of, and thus shown, the drawings may be a quite priceless possession to the people of England for the next five centuries; whereas those exhibited in the Manchester Exhibition were virtually destroyed in that single summer.¹ There is not one of them but is the mere wreck of what it was. I do not choose to name destroyed drawings in the possession of others; but I will name the vignette of the Plains of Troy in my own, which had half the sky baked out of it in that fatal year, and the three drawings of Richmond (Yorkshire), Egglestone Abbey, and Langharne Castle,² which have had by former exposure to light their rose-colors entirely destroyed, and half of their blues, leaving nothing safe but the brown.

I do not think it necessary to repeat my former statements respecting the injurious power of light on certain pigments rapidly, and on all eventually. The respective keepers of the Print Room and of the Manuscripts in the British Museum are the proper persons to be consulted on that matter, their

¹ The Art Treasures Exhibition in 1857, being the year in which the lectures contained in the *Political Economy of Art* were delivered. (See *A Joy for Ever*—*Ruskin's Works*, vol. xi., p. 80.)

² The Plains of Troy;—see for a note of this drawing Mr. Ruskin's *Notes on his own Turners*, 1878, p. 45, where he describes it as "One of the most elaborate of the Byron vignettes, and full of beauty," adding that "the meaning of the sunset contending with the storm is the contest of the powers of Apollo and Athene;" and for the engraving of it, see Murray's edition of *Byron's Life and Works* (1832, seventeen volumes), where it forms the vignette title-page of vol. vii. For the Richmond and the Egglestone Abbey, also in the possession of Mr. Ruskin, see the above mentioned *Notes*, p. 29 (Nos. 26 and 27). The Langharne Castle was formerly in the possession of Mr. W. M. Bigg, at the sale of whose collection in 1868 it was sold for £451.

experience being far larger than mine, and over longer epochs. I will, however, myself undertake to show from my own collection a water-color of the eleventh century absolutely as fresh as when it was laid—having been guarded from light; and water-color burnt by sunlight into a mere dirty stain on the paper, in a year, with the matched piece from which it was cut beside it.

The public may, therefore, at their pleasure treat their Turner drawings as a large exhibition of fireworks, see them explode, clap their hands, and have done with them; or they may treat them as an exhaustless library of noble learning. To this end, they need, first, space and proper light—north light, as clear of smoke as possible, and large windows; and then proper attendance—that is to say, well-paid librarians and servants.

The space will, of course, be difficult to obtain, for while the British public of the upper classes are always ready to pay any money whatever for space to please their pride in their own dining-rooms and ball-rooms, they would not, most of them, give five shillings a year to get a good room in the National Gallery to show the national drawings in. As to the room in which it is at present proposed to place them in the new building, they might just as well, for any good that will ever be got out of them there, be exhibited in a railway tunnel.

And the attendants will also be difficult to obtain. For—and this is the final fact to which I beg your notice—these drawings now in question were, as I above stated, framed by me in 1858. They have been perfectly “accessible” ever since, and are so now, as easily as any works¹ in the shops of Regent Street are accessible over the counter, if you have got a shopman to hand them to you. And the British public have been whining and growling about their exclusion from the sight of these drawings for the last eighteen years, simply because, while they are willing to pay for any quantity of sentinels to stand in boxes about town and country, for any

¹ A misprint for “wares;” see next letter, p. 107.

quantity of flunkeys to stand on boards for additional weight to carriage horses, and for any quantity of footmen to pour out their wine and chop up their meat for them, they would not for all these eighteen years pay so much as a single attendant to hand them the Turner drawings across the National Gallery table ; but only what was needful to obtain for two days in the week the withdrawal from his other duties in the Gallery of the old servant of Mr. Samuel Rogers.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, July 3.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," July 19, 1876.]

TURNER'S DRAWINGS.

To the Editor of "*The Daily Telegraph*."

SIR: In justice to our living water-color artists, will you favor me by printing the accompanying letter,¹ which I think will be satisfactory to many of your readers, on points respecting which my own may have given some of them a false impression? In my former letter, permit me to correct the misprint of "works" in Regent Street for "warea."

I have every reason to suppose Mr. Collingwood Smith's knowledge of the subject entirely trustworthy ; but when all is conceded, must still repeat that no water-color work of value should ever be constantly exposed to light, or even to the air of a crowded metropolis, least of all to gaslight or its fumes.

I am, Sir, yours, etc.,

J. RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE, July 16.

¹ Addressed to Mr. Ruskin by Mr. Collingwood Smith, and requesting Mr. Ruskin to state in a second letter that the remarks as to the effect of light on the water-colors of Turner did not extend to water-color drawings in general ; but that the evanescence of the colors in Turner's drawings was due partly to the peculiar vehicles with which he painted, and partly to the gray paper (saturated with indigo) on which he frequently worked. Mr. Ruskin complied with this request by thus forwarding for publication Mr. Collingwood Smith's letter.

[From "The Times," April 25, 1876.]

COPIES OF TURNER'S DRAWINGS.

To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR: You will oblige me by correcting the misstatement in your columns of the 22d,¹ that "only copies of the copies" of Turner exhibited at 148 New Bond Street, are for sale. The drawings offered for sale by the company will, of course, be always made by Mr. Ward from the originals, just as much as those now exhibited as specimens.

You observe in the course of your article that "surely such attempts could not gratify any one who had a true insight for

¹ The references to The Times allude to an article on the "Copies of Turner Drawings," by Mr. William Ward, of 2 Church Terrace, Richmond, Surrey, which were then, as now, exhibited for sale in the rooms of the Fine Art Society.

Of these copies of Turner, Mr. Ruskin says: "They are executed with extreme care under my own eye by the draughtsman trained by me for the purpose, Mr. Ward. Everything that can be learned from the smaller works of Turner may be as securely learned from these drawings. I have been more than once in doubt, seeing original and copy together, which was which; and I think them about the best works that can now be obtained for a moderate price, representing the authoritative forms of art in landscape."—Extract from letter of Mr. Ruskin, written in 1867. List of Turner Drawings, etc., shown in connection with Mr. Norton's lectures. Boston, 1874, p. 9. (See also *Ariadne Florentina*, p. 152, note.)

The following comment of Mr. Ruskin on one of Mr. Ward's most recent copies is also interesting as evidence that the opinions expressed in this letter are still retained by its writer: "London, 20th March, 1880.—The copy of Turner's drawing of Fluelen, which has been just completed by Mr. Ward, and shown to-day, is beyond my best hopes in every desirable quality of execution; and is certainly as good as it is possible for care and skill to make it. I am so entirely satisfied with it that, for my own personal *pleasure*—irrespective of pride, I should feel scarcely any loss in taking it home with me instead of the original; and for all uses of artistic example or instruction, it is absolutely as good as the original.—JOHN RUSKIN."—The copy in question is from a drawing in the possession of Mr. Ruskin (see the Turner Notes, 1878, No. 70), and was executed for its present proprietor, Mr. T. S. Kennedy, of Meanwoods, Leeds.

Mr. Turner's works?" But the reason that the drawings now at 148 New Bond Street are not for sale is that they *do* gratify me, and are among my extremely valued possessions; and if among the art critics on your staff there be, indeed, any one whose "insight for Mr. Turner's work" you suppose to be greater than mine, I shall have much pleasure in receiving any instructions with which he may favor me, at the National Gallery, on the points either in which Mr. Ward's work may be improved, or on those in which Turner is so superior to Titian and Correggio, that while the public maintain, in Italy, a nation of copyists of these second-rate masters, they are not justified in hoping any success whatever in representing the work of the Londoner, whom, while he was alive, I was always called mad for praising.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

PETERBOROUGH, April 23.

[From "The Times," January 24, 1871.]

"TURNERS," FALSE AND TRUE.

To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR: I have refused until now to express any opinion respecting the picture No. 40¹ in the Exhibition of the Old Masters, feeling extreme reluctance to say anything which its kind owner, to whom the Exhibition owes so much, might deem discourteous.

But I did not suppose it was possible any doubt could long exist among artists as to the character of the work in question; and, as I find its authenticity still in some quarters maintained, I think no other course is open to me than to state that the picture is not by Turner, nor even by an imitator of Turner acquainted with the essential qualities of the master.

¹ Italy, a reputed Turner, lent by the late Mr. Wynn Ellis. No. 235 was A Landscape with Cattle, in the possession of Lord Leconfield.

I am able to assert this on internal evidence only. I never saw the picture before, nor do I know anything of the channels through which it came into the possession of its present proprietor.

No. 235 is, on the contrary, one of the most consummate and majestic works that ever came from the artist's hand, and it is one of the very few now remaining which have not been injured by subsequent treatment.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, Jan. 23.

[From "The Life of Turner," by Walter Thornbury.]

THE CHARACTER OF TURNER.¹

[The following admonition, sent by Mr. Ruskin in 1857 to Mr. Thornbury, and coupled with the advice that for the biographer of Turner there was no time to be lost, "for those who knew him when young are dying daily," forms a fit conclusion to this division of the letters.]

Fix at the beginning the following main characteristics of Turner in your mind, as the keys to the secret of all he said and did:

Uprightness.

Generosity.

Tenderness of heart (extreme).

Sensuality.

Obstinacy (extreme).

Irritability.

Infidelity.

¹ See also *Modern Painters*, vol. v. pp. 365-367, and *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, pp. 181-188, where the character of Turner is further explained, and various anecdotes given in special illustration of his truth, generosity, and kindness of heart.

And be sure that he knew his own power, and felt himself utterly alone in the world from its not being understood. Don't try to mask the dark side. . . .

Yours most truly,
J. RUSKIN.

[See the preface to the first edition of the "Life of Turner;" that to the second contains the following estimate of Mr. Thornbury's book: ' "Lucerne, Dec. 2, 1861.—I have just received and am reading your book with deep interest. I am much gratified by the view you have taken and give of Turner. It is quite what I hoped. What beautiful things you have discovered about him! Thank you for your courteous and far too flattering references to me."]

V.—PICTURES AND ARTISTS.

[From the "Catalogue of the Exhibition of Outlines by the late John Leech, at the Gallery, 9 Conduit Street, Regent Street." 1872.]

JOHN LEECH'S OUTLINES.

I AM honored by the request of the sister of John Leech that I should give some account of the drawings of her brother, which remain in her possession; and I am able to fulfil her request without departing from the rule which has always bound me, not to allow any private interest to weigh with me in speaking of matters which concern the public. It is merely and simply a matter of public concern that the value of these drawings should be known and measures taken for their acquisition, or, at least, for obtaining a characteristic selection from them, as a National property. It cannot be necessary for me, or for any one, now to praise the work of

¹ The book was also referred to in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. p. 365, where Mr. Ruskin speaks of this *Life of Turner*, then still unpublished, as being written "by a biographer, who will, I believe, spare no pains in collecting the few scattered records which exist of a career so uneventful and secluded."

² Nearly eight years after Leech's death on October 29, 1864.

John Leech. Admittedly it contains the finest definition and natural history of the classes of our society, the kindest and subtlest analysis of its foibles, the tenderest flattery of its pretty and well-bred ways, with which the modesty of subservient genius ever amused or immortalized careless masters. But it is not generally known how much more valuable, as art, the first sketches for the woodcuts were than the finished drawings, even before those drawings sustained any loss in engraving.

John Leech was an absolute master of the elements of character,—but not by any means of those of *chiaroscuro*,—and the admirableness of his work diminished as it became elaborate. The first few lines in which he sets down his purpose are invariably of all drawing that I know the most wonderful in their accurate felicity and prosperous haste. It is true that the best possible drawing, whether slight or elaborate, is never hurried. Holbein or Titian, if they lay only a couple of lines, yet lay them quietly, and leave them entirely right. But it needs a certain sternness of temper to do this.

Most, in the prettiest sense of the word, *gentle* artists indulge themselves in the ease, and even trust to the felicity of rapid—and even in a measure inconsiderate—work in sketching, so that the beauty of a sketch is understood to be consistent with what is partly unintentional.

There is, however, one condition of extreme and exquisite skill in which haste may become unerring. It cannot be obtained in completely finished work ; but the hands of Gainsborough, Reynolds, or Tintoret often nearly approach completion at full speed, and the pencil sketches of Turner are expressive almost in the direct ratio of their rapidity.

But of all rapid and condensed realization ever accomplished by the pencil, John Leech's is the most dainty, and the least fallible, in the subjects of which he was cognizant. Not merely right in the traits which he seizes, but refined in the sacrifice of what he refuses.

The drawing becomes slight through fastidiousness not indolence, and the finest discretion has left its touches rare.

In flexibility and lightness of pencilling, nothing but the best outlines of Italian masters with the silver point can be

compared to them. That Leech sketched English squires instead of saints, and their daughters instead of martyrs, does not in the least affect the question respecting skill of pencilling; and I repeat deliberately that nothing but the best work of sixteenth century Italy with the silver point exists in art, which in rapid refinement these playful English drawings do not excel. There are too many of them (fortunately) to be rightly exemplary—I want to see the collection divided, dated carefully, and selected portions placed in good light, in a quite permanent arrangement in each of our great towns in connection with their drawing schools.

I will not indeed have any in Oxford while I am there, because I am afraid that my pupils should think too lightly of their drawing as compared with their other studies, and I doubt their studying anything else but John Leech if they had him to study. But in our servile schools of mechanical drawing, to see what drawing was indeed, which could represent something better than machines, and could not be mimicked by any machinery, would put more life into them than any other teaching I can conceive.

It is, therefore, with the greatest pleasure that I accept the honor of having my name placed on the committee for obtaining funds for the purchase of these drawings; and I trust that the respect of the English public for the gentle character of the master, and their gratitude for the amusement with which he has brightened so many of their days, will be expressed in the only way in which expression is yet possible by due care and wise use of the precious possessions he has left to them.

(Signed) J. RUSKIN.

[From "The Architect," December 27, 1873.]

ERNEST GEORGE'S ETCHINGS.

To the Editor of "The Architect."

MY DEAR SIR: I am entirely glad you had permission to publish some of Mr. Ernest George's etchings;¹ they are the

¹ The number of the Architect in which this letter was printed contained two sketches from Mr. George's Etchings on the Mosel—those,

most precious pieces of work I have seen for many a day, though they are still, like nearly everything the English do best in art, faultful in matters which might have been easily conquered, and not a little wasteful, sometimes of means and time ; I should be glad, therefore, of space enough in your columns to state, with reference to these sketches, some of the principles of etching which I had not time to define in the lectures on engraving I gave this year, at Oxford,¹ and which are too often forgotten even by our best draughtsmen.

I call Mr. George's work precious, chiefly because it indicates an intense perception of points of character in architecture, and a sincere enjoyment of them for their own sake. His drawings are not accumulative of material for future use ; still less are they vain exhibitions of his own skill. He draws the scene in all its true relations, because it delights him, and he perceives what is permanently and altogether characteristic in it. As opposed to such frank and joyful work, most modern architectural drawings are mere diagram or exercise.

I call them precious, in the second place, because they show very great powers of true composition. All their subjects are made delightful more by skill of arrangement than by any dexterities of execution ; and this faculty is very rare amongst landscape painters and architects, because nearly every man who has any glimmering of it naturally takes to figure painting—not that the ambition to paint figures is any sign of the faculty, but that, when people have the faculty, they nearly always have also the ambition. And, indeed, this is quite

viz., of the Elector's Palace, Coblenz, and of the interior of Metz Cathedral. The intention of the Architect to reproduce these etchings had apparently been previously communicated to Mr. Ruskin, who wrote the present letter for the issue in which the etchings were to be given. Mr. George has since published other works of the same kind—*e.g.*, *Etchings in Belgium*, *Etchings on the Loire* (see Mr. Ruskin's advice to him at the end of this letter, p. 116).

¹ The reference must, I think, be to *Ariadne Florentina: Six Lectures on Wood and Metal Engraving* given before the University of Oxford, Michaelmas Term, 1872, and afterwards published, 1873-6. The lectures given in the year 1873 were upon *Tuscan Art*, now published in *Val d'Arno*.

right, if they would not forsake their architecture afterwards, but apply their power of figure design, when gained, to the decoration of their buildings.

To return to Mr. George's work. It is precious, lastly, in its fine sense of serene light and shade, as opposed to the coruscations and horrors of modern attempts in that direction. But it is a pity—and this is the first grand principle of etching which I feel it necessary to affirm—when the instinct of *chiaroscuro* leads the artist to spend time in producing texture on his plate which cannot be ultimately perfect, however labored. All the common raptures concerning blots, burr, delicate biting, and the other tricks of the etching trade, merely indicate imperfect feeling for shadow.

The proper instrument of *chiaroscuro* is the brush ; a wash of sepia, rightly managed, will do more in ten minutes than Rembrandt himself could do in ten days of the most ingenious scratching, or blurt out by the most happy mixtures of art and accident.* As soon as Mr. George has learned what true light and shade is (and a few careful studies with brush or chalk would enable him to do so), he will not labor his etched subjects in vain. The virtue of an etching, in this respect, is to express perfectly harmonious sense of light and shade, but not to realize it. All fine etchings are done with few lines.

Secondly—and this is a still more important general principle (I must let myself fall into dictatorial terms for brevity's sake)—Let your few lines be sternly clear, however delicate, or however dark. All burr and botch is child's play, and a true draughtsman must never be at the mercy of his copper and ink. Drive your line well and fairly home ; don't scrawl or zigzag ; know where your hand is going, and what it is doing, to a hairbreadth ; then bite clear and clean, and let the last impression be as good as the first. When it begins to fail break your plate.

* The value of Rembrandt's etchings is always in the inverse ratio of the labor bestowed on them after his first thoughts have been decisively expressed ; and even the best of his *chiaroscuros* (the spotted shell, for instance) are mere child's play compared to the disciplined light and shade of Italian masters.

Third general principle.

Don't depend much on various biting. For a true master, and a great purpose, even one biting is enough. By no flux or dilution of acid can you ever etch a curl of hair or a cloud; and if you think you can etch the gradations of coarser things, it is only because you have never seen them. Try, at your leisure, to etch a teacup or a tallow candle, of their real size; see what you can make of the gradations of those familiar articles; if you succeed to your mind, you may try something more difficult afterwards.

Lastly. For all definite shades of architectural detail, use pencil or charcoal, or the brush, never the pen point. You can draw a leaf surface rightly in a minute or two with these—with the pen point, never, to all eternity. And on you knowing what the surface of a form is depends your entire power of recognizing good work. The difference between thirteenth century work, wholly beautiful, and a cheap imitation of it, wholly damnable, lies in gradation of surface as subtle as those of a rose-leaf, and which are, to modern sculpture, what singing is to a steam-whistle.

For the rest, the limitation of etched work to few lines enables the sketcher to multiply his subjects, and make his time infinitely more useful to himself and others. I would most humbly solicit, in conclusion, such advantageous use of his gifts from Mr. George. He might etch a little summer tour for us every year, and give permanent and exquisite record of a score of scenes, rich in historical interest, with no more pains than he has spent on one or two of these plates in drawing the dark sides of a wall. Yours faithfully,

JOHN RUSKIN.

[From "The Times," January 20, 1876.]

THE FREDERICK WALKER EXHIBITION.

DEAR MR. MARKS: ' You ask me to say what I feel of Frederick Walker's work, now seen in some collective mass, as far

¹ This letter was written to Mr. H. Stacy Marks, A.R.A., in answer to a request that Mr. Ruskin would in some way record his impression of

as anything can be seen in black-veiled London. You have long known my admiration of his genius, my delight in many passages of his art. These, while he lived, were all I cared to express. If you will have me speak of him now, I will speak the whole truth of what I feel—namely, that every soul in London interested in art ought to go to see that Exhibition, and, amid all the beauty and the sadness of it, very diligently to try and examine themselves as to the share they have had, in their own busy modern life, in arresting the power of this man at the point where it stayed. Very chief share they have had, assuredly. But he himself, in the liberal and radical temper of modern youth, has had his own part in casting down his strength, following wantonly or obstinately his own fancies wherever they led him. For instance, it being Nature's opinion that sky should usually be blue, and it being Mr. Walker's opinion that it should be the color of buff plaster, he resolutely makes it so, for his own isolated satisfaction, partly in affectation also, buff skies being considered by the public more sentimental than blue ones. Again, the laws of all good painting have been long ago determined by absolute masters, whose work cannot be bettered nor departed from—Titian having determined forever what oil-painting is, Angelico what what tempera-painting is, Perugino what fresco-painting is, two hundred years of noble miniature-painting what minutest work on ivory is, and, in modern times, a score of entirely skilful and disciplined draughtsmen what pure water-color and pure body-color painting on paper are (Turner's Yorkshire drawing of Hornby Castle, now at Kensington, and John Lewis's "Encampment under Sinai,"¹ being namable at once as unsurpassable standards), here is Mr. Walker refusing to learn anything from any of those schools or masters, but in-

the Frederick Walker Exhibition, then open to the public. Frederick Walker died in June, 1875, at the early age of thirty-five, only four years after having been elected an Associate of the Royal Academy.

¹ The Hornby Castle was executed, together with the rest of the "great Yorksnire series," for Whitaker's History of Richmondshire (Longman, 1823).—The picture of John Lewis here alluded to is described in Mr. Ruskin's Academy Notes, 1856, No. II., p. 37.

venting a semi-miniature, quarter fresco, quarter wash manner of his own—exquisitely clever, and reaching, under such clever management, delightfulest results here and there, but which betrays his genius into perpetual experiment instead of achievement, and his life into woful vacillation between the good, old, quiet room of the Water-Color Society, and your labyrinthine magnificence at Burlington House.

Lastly, and in worst error, the libraries of England being full of true and noble books—her annals of true and noble history, and her traditions of beautiful and noble—in these scientific times I must say, I suppose, “mythology”—not religion—from all these elements of mental education and subjects of serviceable art, he turns recklessly away to enrich the advertisements of the circulating library, to sketch whatever pleases his fancy, barefooted, or in dainty boots, of modern beggary and fashion, and enforce, with laboriously symbolical pathos, his adherence to Justice Shallow’s sublime theology that “all shall die.”

That theology has indeed been preached by stronger men, again and again, from Horace’s days to our own, but never to so little purpose. “Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,” said wisely in his way, the Latin farmer: ate his beans and bacon in comfort, had his suppers of the gods on the fair earth, with his servants jesting round the table, and left eternal monuments of earthly wisdom and of cricket-song. “Let us labor and be just, for to-morrow we die, and after death the Judgment,” said Holbein and Durer, and left eternal monuments of upright human toil and honorable gloom of godly fear. “Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, for to-morrow we die, and shall be with God,” said Angelico and Giotto, and left eternal monuments of divinely-blazoned heraldry of Heaven. “Let us smoke pipes, make money, read bad novels, walk in bad air, and say sentimentally how sick we are in the afternoon, for to-morrow we die, and shall be made ourselves clay pipes,” says the modern world, and drags this poor bright painter down into the abyss with it, vainly clutching at a handful or two of scent and flowers in the May gardens.

Under which sorrowful terms, being told also by your grand Academicians that he should paint the nude, and, accordingly, wasting a year or two of his life in trying to paint schoolboys' backs and legs without their shirts or breeches, and with such other magazine material as he can pick up of sick gypsies, faded gentlewomen, pretty girls disguised as paupers, and red-roofed or gray remnants of old English villages and manor-house, last wrecks of the country's peace and honor, remaining yet visible among the black ravages of its ruin, he supplies the demands of his temporary public, scarcely patient, even now that he has gone, to pause beside his delicate tulips or under his sharp-leaved willows, and repent for the passing tints and fallen petals of the life that might have been so precious, and, perhaps, in better days, prolonged.

That is the main moral of the Exhibition. Of the beauty of the drawings, accepting them for what they aim at being, there is little need that I should add anything to what has been already said rightly by the chief organs of the London Press. Nothing can go beyond them in subtlety of exhibited touch (to be distinguished, however, observe always from the serene completion of master's work, disdaining the applause to be gained by its manifestation;) their harmonies of amber-color and purple are full of exquisite beauty in their chosen key; their composition always graceful, often admirable, and the sympathy they express with all conditions of human life most kind and true; not without power of rendering character which would have been more recognized in an inferior artist, because it would have been less restrained by the love of beauty.

I might, perhaps, in my days of youth and good fortune, have written what the public would have called "eloquent passages" on the subjects of the Almshouse and the Old Gate;' being now myself old and decrepit (besides being

' The following are the pictures, as catalogued, mentioned here :

1. The Almshouse—No. 52—called the House of Refuge. Oil on canvas. A garden and terrace in quadrangle of almshouses; on left an old

much bothered with beggars, and in perpetual feud with parish officers), and having seen every building I cared for in the world ruined, I pass these two pictures somewhat hastily by, and try to enjoy myself a little in the cottage gardens. Only one of them, however,—No. 71,—has right sunshine in it, and that is a sort of walled paddock where I begin directly to feel uncomfortable about the lamb, lest, perchance, some front shop in the cottages belong to a butcher. If only it and I could get away to a bit of thymy hill-side, we should be so much happier, leaving the luminous—perhaps too ideally luminous—child to adorn the pathetic paddock. I am too shy to speak to either of those two beautiful ladies among the lilies (37, 67), and take refuge among the shy children before the “Chaplain’s Daughter” (20)—delightfullest, it seems to me, of the minor designs, and a piece of most true and wise satire. The sketches of the “Daughter of Heth” go far to tempt me to read the novel; and ashamed of this weakness, I retreat resolutely to the side of the exemplary young girl knitting in the “Old Farm Garden” (33), and would instantly pick up

woman and girl; on right a mower cutting grass. Exhibited R. A. 1872.

2. The Old Gate—No. 48—oil on canvas. Lady in black and servant with basket coming through the gate of old mansion; four children at play at foot of steps; two villagers and dog in foreground. Exhibited R. A. 1869.

3. The Cottage Gardens—No. 71, The Spring of Life. Water-color. Lady in a garden with two children and a lamb; a cherry tree in blossom. Exhibited at the Water-Color Society, Winter 1866–7. See also Nos. 14 and 21.

4. Ladies and Lilies—No. 37, A Lady in a Garden, Perthshire. Water-color. A lady seated on a knoll on which is a sun-dial; greyhound on left; background, old manor-house. No. 67, Lilies. Water-color. Lady in a garden watering flowers, chiefly lilies. Exhibited at the Water-Color Society, Winter, 1869–70 and 1868–9 respectively.

5. The Chaplain’s Daughter—No. 20, subject from Miss Thackeray’s Jack the Giant-killer. Exhibited at the Water-Color Society, Summer 1868.

6. Daughter of Heth, by W. Black. No. 87. Do ye no ken this is the Sabbath? Young lady at piano; servant enters hurriedly. (Study in black and white, executed in 1872.)—[See vol. i. p. 41. “‘Preserve

her ball of worsted for her, but that I wouldn't for the world disappoint the cat. No drawing in the room is more delicately completed than this unpretending subject, and the flower-painting in it, for instantaneous grace of creative touch, cannot be rivalled; it is worth all the Dutch flower-pieces in the world.

Much instructed, and more humiliated, by passage after passage of its rapidly-grouped color, I get finally away into the comfortable corner beside the salmon-fishers and the mushrooms; and the last-named drawing, despise me who may, keeps me till I've no more time to stay, for it entirely beats my dear old William Hunt in the simplicity of its execution, and rivals him in the subtlest truth.

I say nothing of the "Fishmonger's Stalls" (952), though there are qualities of the same kind in these also, for they somewhat provoke me by their waste of time—the labor spent on one of them would have painted twenty instructive studies of fish of their real size. And it is well for artists in general to observe that when they do condescend to paint still life carefully—whether fruit, fungi, or fish—it must at least be of

us a', lassie, do ye ken what ye're doing? Do ye no ken that this is the Sabbath, and that you're in a respectable house?' The girl turned round with more wonder than alarm in her face: 'Is it not right to play music on Sunday?' "—No. 131. Three more studies for the same novel.)

7. The Old Farm Garden—No. 33—Water-color. A girl, with cat on lawn, knitting; garden path bordered by tulips; farm buildings in background. Painted in 1871.

8. Salmon-fishers—No. 47—Fisherman and Boy—Water-color. Keeper and boy on bank of river. Glen Spean. Salmon in foreground. Exhibited at the Water-Color Society, Summer 1867.

9. Mushrooms and Fungi—No. 41—Water-color. Painted in 1873.

10. Fishmonger's Stalls—Nos. 9 and 62 (not 952)—viz., No. 9, A Fishmonger's Shop. Water-color. Painted in 1873; and No. 62, also A Fishmonger's Shop. Water-color. Fishmongers selling fish; lady and boy in costumes of about 1800. Exhibited at Water-Color Society, Winter 1872-3. (The Tobias of Perugino has been already alluded to, p. 54, note).

11. No. 68. The Ferry. Water-color. Sight size, $11\frac{1}{2} \times 18$ in. A ferry boat, in which are two figures, a boatman and a lady, approaching a landing-place; on the bank figures of villagers, and children feeding swans. Exhibited at Water-Color Society, Winter 1870-71.

the real size. The portrait of a man or woman is only justifiably made small that it may be portable, and nobody wants to carry about the minature of a cod ; and if the reader will waste five minutes of his season in London in the National Gallery, he may see in the hand of Perugino's Tobias a fish worth all these on the boards together.

Some blame of the same kind attaches to the marvellous drawing No. 68. It is all very well for a young artist to show how much work he can put into an inch, but very painful for an old gentleman of fifty-seven to have to make out all the groups through a magnifying-glass. I could say something malicious about the boat, in consequence of the effect of this exertion on my temper, but will not, and leave with unqualified praise the remainder of the lesser drawings to the attention which each will variously reward.

Nor, in what I have already, it may be thought, too bluntly said, ought the friends of the noble artist to feel that I am unkind. It is because I know his real power more deeply than any of the admirers who gave him indiscriminate applause, that I think it right distinctly to mark the causes which prevented his reaching heights they did not conceive, and ended by placing one more tablet in the street of tombs, which the passionate folly and uninstructed confusion of modern English society prolong into dark perspective above the graves of its youth.

I am, dear Marks, always very faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

VI.—ARCHITECTURE.

[From "The Oxford Museum," by H. W. Acland and J. Ruskin. 1859. pp. 44-56.]

*GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE AND THE OXFORD MUSEUM.*¹

DEAR ACLAND : I have been very anxious, since I last heard from you, respecting the progress of the works at the Museum, as I thought I could trace in your expressions some doubt of an entirely satisfactory issue.

¹ In 1858 the Oxford Museum was in course of building, its architects being Sir Thomas Deane and Mr. Woodward, and its style modern

Entirely satisfactory very few issues are, or can be ; and when the enterprise, as in this instance, involves the development of many new and progressive principles, we must always be prepared for a due measure of disappointment,—due partly to human weakness, and partly to what the ancients would have called fate,—and we may, perhaps, most wisely call the law of trial, which forbids any great good being usually accomplished without various compensations and deductions, probably not a little humiliating.

Perhaps in writing to you what seems to me to be the bearing of matters respecting your Museum, I may be answering a few of the doubts of others, as well as fears of your own.

I am quite sure that when you first used your influence to advocate the claims of a Gothic design, you did so under the conviction, shared by all the seriously-purposed defenders of the Gothic style, that the essence and power of Gothic, properly so called, lay in its adaptability to all need ; in that perfect and unlimited flexibility which would enable the architect to provide all that was required, in the simplest and most

Gothic, whilst amongst those chiefly interested in it were Dr. Acland (the Regius Professor of Medicine) and Mr. Ruskin. The present letter, written in June, 1858, was read by Dr. Acland at a lecture given by him in that summer “ to the members of the Architectural Societies that met in Oxford ” at that time. I am permitted to reprint the following passage from Dr. Acland’s preface to the printed lecture, as well as one or two passages from the lecture itself (see below, pp. 128 and 129) : “ Many have yet to learn the apparently simple truth, that to an Artist his Art is his means of probation in this life ; and that, whatever it may have of frivolity to us, to him it is as the two or the five talents, to be accounted for hereafter. I might say much on this point, for the full scope of the word Art seems by some to be even now unrecognized. Before the period of printing, Art was the largest mode of permanently recording human thought ; it was spoken in every epoch, in all countries, and delivered in almost every material. In buildings, on medals and coins, in porcelain and earthenware, on wood, ivory, parchment, paper and canvas, the graver or the pencil has recorded the ideas of every form of society, of every variety of race and of every character. What wonder that the Artist is jealous of his craft, and proud of his brotherhood ? ”—See *The Oxford Museum*, p. 4. The reader is also referred to *Sesame and Lilies*, 1871 ed., §§ 103–4.

convenient way ; and to give you the best offices, the best lecture-rooms, laboratories, and museums, which could be provided with the sum of money at his disposal.

So far as the architect has failed in doing this ; so far as you find yourself, with the other professors, in anywise inconvenienced by forms of architecture ; so far as pillars or piers come in your way, when you have to point, or vaults in the way of your voice, when you have to speak, or mullions in the way of your light, when you want to see—just so far the architect has failed in expressing his own principles, or those of pure Gothic art. I do not suppose that such failure has taken place to any considerable extent ; but so far as it has taken place, it cannot in justice be laid to the score of the style, since precedent has shown sufficiently, that very uncomfortable and useless rooms may be provided in all other styles as well as in Gothic ; and I think if, in a building arranged for many objects of various kinds, at a time when the practice of architecture has been somewhat confused by the inventions of modern science, and is hardly yet organized completely with respect to the new means at his disposal ; if, under such circumstances, and with somewhat limited funds, you have yet obtained a building in all main points properly fulfilling its requirements, you have, I think, as much as could be hoped from the adoption of any style whatsoever.

But I am much more anxious about the decoration of the building ; for I fear that it will be hurried in completion, and that, partly in haste and partly in mistimed economy, a great opportunity may be lost of advancing the best interest of architectural, and in that, of all other arts. For the principles of Gothic decoration, in themselves as simple and beautiful as those of Gothic construction, are far less understood, as yet, by the English public, and it is little likely that any effective measures can be taken to carry them out. You know as well as I, what those principles are ; yet it may be convenient to you that I should here state them briefly as I accept them myself, and have reason to suppose they are accepted by the principal promoters of the Gothic revival.

I. The first principle of Gothic decoration is that a given

quantity of good art will be more generally useful when exhibited on a large scale, and forming part of a connected system, than when it is small and separated. That is to say, a piece of sculpture or painting, of a certain allowed merit, will be more useful when seen on the front of a building, or at the end of a room, and therefore by many persons, than if it be so small as to be only capable of being seen by one or two at a time ; and it will be more useful when so combined with other work as to produce that kind of impression usually termed "sublime,"—as it is felt on looking at any great series of fixed paintings, or at the front of a cathedral,—than if it be so separated as to excite only a special wonder or admiration, such as we feel for a jewel in a cabinet.

The paintings by Meissonier in the French Exhibition of this year were bought, I believe, before the Exhibition opened, for 250 guineas each. They each represented one figure, about six inches high—one, a student reading ; the other, a courtier standing in a dress-coat. Neither of these paintings conveyed any information, or produced any emotion whatever, except that of surprise at their minute and dextrous execution. They will be placed by their possessors on the walls of small private apartments, where they will probably, once or twice a week, form the subject of five minutes' conversation while people drink their coffee after dinner. The sum expended on these toys would have been amply sufficient to cover a large building with noble frescoes, appealing to every passer-by, and representing a large portion of the history of any given period. But the general tendency of the European patrons of art is to grudge all sums spent in a way thus calculated to confer benefit on the public, and to grudge none for minute treasures of which the principal advantage is that a lock and key can always render them invisible.

I have no hesitation in saying that an acquisitive selfishness, rejoicing somewhat even in the sensation of possessing what can not be seen by others, is at the root of this art-patronage. It is, of course, coupled with a sense of securer and more convenient investment in what may be easily protected and easily carried from place to place, than in large and immovable

works ; and also with a vulgar delight in the minute curiosities of productive art, rather than in the exercise of inventive genius, or the expression of great facts or emotions.

The first aim of the Gothic Revivalists is to counteract, as far as possible, this feeling on all its three grounds. We desire (A) to make art large and publicly beneficial, instead of small and privately engrossed or secluded ; (B) to make art fixed instead of portable, associating it with local character and historical memory ; (C) to make art expressive instead of curious, valuable for its suggestions and teachings, more than for the mode of its manufacture.

II. The second great principle of the Gothic Revivalists is that all art employed in decoration should be informative, conveying truthful statements about natural facts, if it conveys *any* statement. It may sometimes merely compose its decorations of mosaics, checkers, bosses, or other meaningless ornaments : but if it represents organic form (and in all important places it *will* represent it), it will give that form truthfully, with as much resemblance to nature as the necessary treatment of the piece of ornament in question will admit of.

This principle is more disputed than the first among the Gothic Revivalists themselves. I, however, hold it simply and entirely, believing that ornamentation is always *cæteris paribus*, most valuable and beautiful when it is founded on the most extended knowledge of natural forms, and conveys continually such knowledge to the spectator.¹

III. The third great principle of the Gothic Revival is that all architectural ornamentation should be executed by the men who design it, and should be of various degrees of excellence, admitting, and therefore exciting, the intelligent co-operation of various classes of workmen ; and that a great public edifice should be, in sculpture and painting, somewhat the same as a great chorus of music, in which, while, perhaps, there may be only one or two voices perfectly trained, and of perfect sweetness (the rest being in various degrees weaker and less cultivated), yet all being ruled in harmony, and each

¹ See next letter, pp. 128 *seqq.*

sustaining a part consistent with its strength, the body of sound is sublime, in spite of individual weaknesses.

The Museum at Oxford was, I know, intended by its designer to exhibit in its decoration the working of these three principles ; but in the very fact of its doing so, it becomes exposed to chances of occasional failure, or even to serious discomfitures, such as would not at all have attended the adoption of an established mode of modern work. It is easy to carve capitals on models known for four thousand years, and impossible to fail in the application of mechanical methods and formalized rules. But it is not possible to appeal vigorously to new canons of judgment without the chance of giving offence ; nor to summon into service the various phases of human temper and intelligence, without occasionally finding the tempers rough and the intelligence feeble. The Oxford Museum is, I believe, the first building in this country which has had its ornamentation, in any telling parts, trusted to the invention of the workman ; the result is highly satisfactory, the projecting windows of the staircases being as beautiful in effect as anything I know in civil Gothic : but far more may be accomplished for the building if the completion of its carving be not hastened ; many men of high artistic power might be brought to take an interest in it, and various lessons and suggestions given to the workmen which would materially advantage the final decoration of leading features. No very great Gothic building, so far as I know, was ever yet completed without some of this wise deliberation and fruitful patience.

I was in hopes from the beginning that the sculpture might have been rendered typically illustrative of the English Flora : how far this idea has been as yet carried out I do not know ; but I know that it cannot be properly carried out without a careful examination of the available character of the principal genera, such as architects have not hitherto undertaken. The proposal which I heard advanced the other day, of adding a bold entrance-porch to the façade, appeared to me every way full of advantage, the blankness of the façade having been, to my mind, from the first, a serious fault in the design. If a

subscription were opened for the purpose of erecting one, I should think there were few persons interested in modern art who would not be glad to join in forwarding such an object.

I think I could answer for some portions of the design being superintended by the best of our modern sculptors and painters; and I believe that, if so superintended, the porch might and would become the crowning beauty of the building, and make all the difference between its being only a satisfactory and meritorious work, or a most lovely and impressive one.

The interior decoration is a matter of much greater difficulty; perhaps you will allow me to defer the few words I have to say about it till I have time for another letter: which, however, I hope to find speedily.

Believe me, my dear Acland, ever affectionately yours,
J. RUSKIN.¹

[From "The Oxford Museum," pp. 60-90.]

GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE AND THE OXFORD MUSEUM.

January 20, 1859.

MY DEAR ACLAND: I was not able to write, as I had hoped, from Switzerland, for I found it impossible to lay down any principles respecting the decoration of the Museum which did

¹ After reading this letter to his audience, Dr. Acland thus continued: "The principles thus clearly enumerated by Mr. Ruskin are, in the main, those that animate the earnest student of Gothic. It is not for me especially to advocate Gothic Art, but only to urge, that if called into life, it should be in conformity to its own proper laws of vitality. If week after week, in my youth, with fresh senses and a docile spirit, I have drank in each golden glow that is poured by a Mediterranean sun from over the blue Ægean upon the Athenian Parthenon,—if, day by day, sitting on Mars' Hill, I have watched each purple shadow, as the temple darkened in majesty against the evening sky,—if so, it has been to teach me, as the alphabet of all Art, to love all truth and to hate all falsehood, and to kiss the hand of every Master who has brought down, under whatever circumstance, and in whatever age, one spark of true light from the Beauty and the subtle Law, which stamps the meanest work of the Ever-living, Ever-working Artist."—*The Oxford Museum*, pp. 56-7.

not in one way or other involve disputed points, too many, and too subtle, to be discussed in a letter. Nor do I feel the difficulty less in writing to you now, so far as regards the question occurring in our late conversations, respecting the best mode of completing these interior decorations. Yet I must write, if only to ask that I may be in some way associated with you in what you are now doing to bring the Museum more definitely before the public mind—that I may be associated at least in the expression of my deep sense of the noble purpose of the building—of the noble sincerity of effort in its architect—of the endless good which the teachings to which it will be devoted must, in their ultimate issue, accomplish for mankind. How vast the range of that issue, you have shown in the lecture which I have just read, in which you have so admirably traced the chain of the physical sciences as it encompasses the great concords of this visible universe.¹

¹ See *The Oxford Museum*, pp. 17-23. The following is a portion of the passage alluded to: "Without the Geologist on one side, and the Anatomist and Physiologist on the other, Zoology is not worthy of its name. The student of life, bearing in mind the more general laws which in the several departments above named he will have sought to appreciate, will find in the collections of Zoology, combined with the Geological specimens and the dissections of the Anatomist, a boundless field of interest and of inquiry, to which almost every other science lends its aid: from each science he borrows a special light to guide him through the ranges of extinct and existing animal forms, from the lowest up to the highest types, which, last and most perfect, but pre-shadowed in previous ages, is seen in Man. By the aid of physiological illustrations he begins to understand how hard to unravel are the complex mechanisms and prescient intentions of the Maker of all; and he slowly learns to appreciate what exquisite care is needed for discovering the real action of even an apparently comprehended machine. And so at last, almost bewildered, but not cast down, he attempts to scrutinize in the rooms devoted to Medicine, the various injuries which man is doomed to undergo in his progress towards death; he begins to revere the beneficent contrivances which shine forth in the midst of suffering and disease, and to veil his face before the mysterious alterations of structure, to which there seem attached pain, with scarce relief, and a steady advance, without a check, to death. He will look, and as he looks, will cherish hope, not unmixed with prayer, that the great Art of Healing may by all these things advance and that by the progress of

But how deep the workings of these new springs of knowledge are to be, and how great our need of them, and how far the brightness and the beneficence of them are to reach among all the best interests of men—perhaps none of us can yet conceive, far less know or say. For, much as I reverence physical science as a means of mental education (and you know how I have contended for it, as such, now these twenty years, from the sunny afternoon of spring when Ehrenberg and you and I went hunting for infusoria in Christchurch meadow streams, to the hour when the prize offered by Sir Walter Trevelyan and yourself for the best essay on the Fauna of that meadow, marked the opening of a new era in English education¹)—much, I say, as I reverence physical science in this function, I reverence it, at this moment, more as the source of utmost human practical power, and the means by which the far-distant races of the world, who now sit in darkness and the shadow of death, are to be reached and regenerated. At home or far away—the call is equally instant—here, for want of more extended physical science, there is plague in our streets, famine in our fields; the pest strikes root and fruit over a hemisphere of the earth, we know not why; the voices of our children fade away into silence of venomous death, we know not why; the population of this most civilized country resists every effort to lead it into purity of habit and habitation—to give it genuineness of nourish-

profounder science, by the spread among the people of the resultant practical knowledge, by stricter obedience to physiological laws, by a consequent more self-denying spirit, some disorders may at a future day be cured, which cannot be prevented, and some, perhaps, prevented, which never can be cured."

¹ Christian Gottfried Ehrenberg, the naturalist and author of many works, of which those on infusoria may be especially noted here. He was born in 1795, and in 1842 was elected Principal Secretary to the Berlin Academy of Science, which post he held till his death in 1876. The late Sir Walter Calverley Trevelyan, Bart., will also be remembered in connection with the study of natural science, as well as for his efforts in philanthropy. He died in March, 1879. I have been unable to find any further information as to the prize mentioned by Mr. Ruskin, or as to the essay which obtained it.

ment, and wholesomeness of air, as a new interference with its liberty ; and insists vociferously on its right to helpless death. All this is terrible ; but it is more terrible yet that dim, phosphorescent, frightful superstitions still hold their own over two-thirds of the inhabited globe, and that all the phenomena of nature which were intended by the Creator to enforce His eternal laws of love and judgment, and which, rightly understood, enforce them more strongly by their patient beneficence, and their salutary destructiveness, than the miraculous dew on Gideon's fleece, or the restrained lightnings of Horeb—that all these legends of God's daily dealing with His creatures remain unread, or are read backwards, into blind, hundred-armed horror of idol cosmogony.

How strange it seems that physical science should ever have been thought adverse to religion ! The pride of physical science is, indeed, adverse, like every other pride, both to religion and truth ; but sincerity of science, so far from being hostile, is the path-maker among the mountains for the feet of those who publish peace.

Now, therefore, and now only, it seems to me, the University has become complete in her function as a teacher of the youth of the nation to which every hour gives wider authority over distant lands ; and from which every rood of extended dominion demands new, various, and variously applicable knowledge of the laws which govern the constitution of the globe, and must finally regulate the industry, no less than discipline the intellect, of the human race. I can hardly turn my mind from these deep causes of exultation to the minor difficulties which beset or restrict your undertaking. The great work is accomplished ; the immediate impression made by it is of little importance ; and as for my own special subjects of thought or aim, though many of them are closely involved in what has been done, and some principles which I believe to be, in their way, of great importance, are awkwardly compromised in what has been imperfectly done—all these I am tempted to waive, or content to compromise when only I know that the building is in main points fit for its mighty work. Yet you will not think that it was matter of indifference to me

when I saw, as I went over Professor Brodie's¹ chemical laboratories the other day, how closely this success of adaptation was connected with the choice of the style. It was very touching and wonderful to me. Here was the architecture which I had learned to know and love in pensive ruins, deserted by the hopes and efforts of men, or in dismantled fortress-fragments recording only their cruelty—here was this very architecture lending itself, as if created only for these, to the foremost activities of human discovery, and the tenderest functions of human mercy. No other architecture, as I felt in an instant, could have thus adapted itself to a new and strange office. No fixed arrangements of frieze and pillar, nor accepted proportions of wall and roof, nor practised refinement of classical decoration, could have otherwise than absurdly and fantastically yielded its bed to the crucible, and its blast to the furnace ; but these old vaultings and strong buttresses—ready always to do service to man, whatever his bidding—to shake the waves of war back from his seats of rock, or prolonged through faint twilights of sanctuary, the sighs of his superstition—he had but to ask it of them, and they entered at once into the lowliest ministries of the arts of healing, and the sternest and clearest offices in the service of science.

And the longer I examined the Museum arrangements, the more I felt that it could be only some accidental delay in the recognition of this efficiency for its work which had caused any feeling adverse to its progress among the members of the University. The general idea about the Museum has perhaps been, hitherto, that it is a forced endeavor to bring decorative forms of architecture into uncongenial uses ; whereas, the real fact is, as far as I can discern it, that no other architecture would, under the required circumstances, have been *possible* ; and that any effort to introduce classical types of form into these laboratories and museums must have ended in ludicrous discomfiture. But the building has now reached a point of

¹ Mr. Brodie, who succeeded his father as Sir Benjamin Brodie in 1867, was appointed Professor of Chemistry at Oxford in 1855.

crisis, and it depends upon the treatment which its rooms now receive in completion, whether the facts of their propriety and utility be acknowledged by the public, or lost sight of in the distraction of their attention to matters wholly external.

So strongly I feel this, that, whatever means of decoration had been at your disposal, I should have been inclined to recommend an exceeding reserve in that matter. Perhaps I should even have desired such reserve on abstract grounds of feeling. The study of Natural History is one eminently addressed to the active energies of body and mind. Nothing is to be got out of it by dreaming, not always much by thinking—everything by seeking and seeing. It is work for the hills and fields,—work of foot and hand, knife and hammer,—so far as it is to be afterwards carried on in the house, the more active and workmanlike our proceedings the better, fresh air blowing in from the windows, and nothing interfering with the free space for our shelves and instruments on the walls. I am not sure that much interior imagery or color, or other exciting address to any of the observant faculties, would be desirable under such circumstances. You know best; but I should no more think of painting in bright colors beside you, while you were dissecting or analyzing, than of entertaining you by a concert of fifes and cymbals.

But farther: Do you suppose Gothic decoration is an easy thing, or that it is to be carried out with a certainty of success at the first trial, under new and difficult conditions? The system of the Gothic decorations took eight hundred years to mature, gathering its power by undivided inheritance of traditional method, and unbroken accession of systematic power; from its culminating point in the Sainte Chapelle, it faded through four hundred years of splendid decline; now for two centuries it has lain dead—and more than so—buried; and more than so, forgotten, as a dead man out of mind; do you expect to revive it out of those retorts and furnaces of yours, as the cloud-spirit of the Arabian sea rose from beneath the seals of Solomon? Perhaps I have been myself faultfully answerable for this too eager hope in your mind (as well as in that of others) by what I have urged so often respecting

the duty of bringing out the power of subordinate workmen in decorative design. But do you think I meant workmen trained (or untrained) in the way that ours have been until lately, and then cast loose on a sudden, into unassisted contentions with unknown elements of style? I meant the precise contrary of this; I meant workmen as we have yet to create them: men inheriting the instincts of their craft through many generations, rigidly trained in every mechanical art that bears on their materials, and familiarized from infancy with every condition of their beautiful and perfect treatment; informed and refined in manhood, by constant observation of all natural fact and form; then classed, according to their proved capacities, in ordered companies, in which every man shall know his part, and take it calmly and without effort or doubt,—indisputably well, unaccusably accomplished,—mailed and weaponed *cap-à-pie* for his place and function. Can you lay your hand on such men? or do you think that mere natural good-will and good-feeling can at once supply their place? Not so: and the more faithful and earnest the minds you have to deal with, the more careful you should be not to urge them towards fields of effort, in which, too early committed, they can only be put to unserviceable defeat.

Nor can you hope to accomplish by rule or system what cannot be done by individual taste. The laws of color are definable up to certain limits, but they are not yet defined. So far are they from definition, that the last, and, on the whole, best work on the subject (Sir Gardner Wilkinson's) declares the "color concords" of preceding authors to be discords, and *vice versa*.¹

Much, therefore, as I love color decoration when it is rightly given, and essential as it has been felt by the great architects of all periods to the completion of their work, I would not, in your place, endeavor to carry out such decoration at present, in any elaborate degree, in the interior of the Museum. Leave it for future thought; above all, try no

¹ Sir Gardner Wilkinson's book *On Color and the Diffusion of Taste* was published in 1858.

experiments. Let small drawings be made of the proposed arrangements of color in every room ; have them altered on the paper till you feel they are right ; then carry them out firmly and simply ; but, observe, with as delicate execution as possible. Rough work is good in its place, three hundred feet above the eye, on a cathedral front, but not in the interior of rooms, devoted to studies in which everything depends upon accuracy of touch and keenness of sight.

With respect to this finishing, by the last touches bestowed on the *sculpture* of the building, I feel painfully the harmfulness of any ill-advised parsimony at this moment. For it may, perhaps, be alleged by the advocates of retrenchment, that so long as the building is fit for its uses (and your report is conclusive as to its being so), economy in treatment of external feature is perfectly allowable, and will in nowise diminish the serviceableness of the building in the great objects which its designs regarded. To a certain extent this is true. You have comfortable rooms, I hope sufficient apparatus ; and it now depends much more on the professors than on the ornaments of the building, whether or not it is to become a bright or obscure centre of public instruction. Yet there are other points to be considered. As the building stands at present, there is a discouraging aspect of parsimony about it. One sees that the architect has done the utmost he could with the means at his disposal, and that just at the point of reaching what was right, he has been stopped for want of funds. This is visible in almost every stone of the edifice. It separates it with broad distinctiveness from all the other buildings in the University. It may be seen at once that our other public institutions, and all our colleges—though some of them simply designed—are yet *richly* built, never pinchingly. Pieces of princely costliness, every here and there, mingle among the simplicities or severities of the student's life. What practical need, for instance, have we at Christchurch of the beautiful fan-vaulting under which we ascend to dine ? We might have as easily achieved the eminence of our banquets under a plain vault. What need have the readers in the Bodleian of the ribbed traceries which decorate its external walls ? Yet, which

of those readers would not think that learning was insulted by their removal? And are there any of the students of Balliol devoid of gratitude for the kindly munificence of the man who gave them the beautiful sculptured brackets of their oriel window, when three massy projecting stones would have answered the purpose just as well? In these and also other regarded and pleasant portions of our colleges, we find always a wealthy and worthy completion of all appointed features, which I believe is not without strong, though untraced effect, on the minds of the younger scholars, giving them respect for the branches of learning which these buildings are intended to honor, and increasing, in a certain degree, that sense of the value of delicacy and accuracy which is the first condition of advance in those branches of learning themselves.

Your Museum, if you now bring it to hurried completion, will convey an impression directly the reverse of this. It will have the look of a place, not where a revered system of instruction is established, but where an unadvised experiment is being disadvantageously attempted. It is yet in your power to avoid this, and to make the edifice as noble in aspect as in function. Whatever chance there may be of failure in interior work, rich ornamentation may be given, without any chance of failure, to just that portion of the exterior which will give pleasure to every passer-by, and express the meaning of the building best to the eyes of strangers. There is, I repeat, no chance of serious failure in this external decoration, because your architect has at his command the aid of men, such as worked with the architects of past times. Not only has the art of Gothic sculpture in part remained, though that of Gothic color has been long lost, but the unselfish—and, I regret to say, in part self-sacrificing—zeal of two first-rate sculptors, Mr. Munro and Mr. Woolner, which has already given you a series of noble statues, is still at your disposal, to head and systematize the efforts of inferior workmen.

I do not know if you will attribute it to a higher estimate than yours of the genius of the O'Shea family,¹ or to a lower

¹ See note to p. 139.

estimate of what they have as yet accomplished, that I believe they will, as they proceed, produce much better ornamental sculpture than any at present completed in the Museum. It is also to be remembered that sculptors are able to work for us with a directness of meaning which none of our painters could bring to their task, even were they disposed to help us. A painter is scarcely excited to his strength, but by subjects full of circumstance, such as it would be difficult to suggest appropriately in the present building; but a sculptor has room enough for his full power in the portrait statues, which are necessarily the leading features of good Gothic decoration. Let me pray you, therefore, so far as you have influence with the delegacy, to entreat their favorable consideration of the project stated in Mr. Greswell's appeal—the enrichment of the doorway, and the completion of the sculpture of the West Front. There is a reason for desiring such a plan to be carried out, of wider reach than any bearing on the interest of the Museum itself. I believe that the elevation of all arts in England to their true dignity, depends principally on our recovering that unity of purpose in sculptors and architects, which characterized the designers of all great Christian buildings. Sculpture, separated from architecture, always degenerates into effeminacies and conceits; architecture, stripped of sculpture, is at best a convenient arrangement of dead walls; associated, they not only adorn, but reciprocally exalt each other, and give to all the arts of the country in which they thus exist, a correspondent tone of majesty.

But I would plead for the enrichment of this doorway by portrait sculpture, not so much even on any of these important grounds, as because it would be the first example in modern English architecture of the real value and right place of commemorative statues. We seem never to know at present where to put such statues. In the midst of the blighted trees of desolate squares, or at the crossings of confused streets, or balanced on the pinnacles of pillars, or riding across the tops of triumphal arches, or blocking up the aisles of cathedrals—in none of these positions, I think, does the portrait statue answer its purpose. It may be a question whether the erec-

tion of such statues is honorable to the erectors, but assuredly it is not honorable to the persons whom it pretends to commemorate; nor is it any wise matter of exultation to a man who has deserved well of his country to reflect that he may one day encumber a crossing, or disfigure a park gate. But there is no man of worth or heart who would not feel it a high and priceless reward that his statue should be placed where it might remind the youth of England of what had been exemplary in his life, or useful in his labors, and might be regarded with no empty reverence, no fruitless pensiveness, but with the emulative, eager, unstinted passionateness of honor, which youth pays to the dead leaders of the cause it loves, or discoverers of the light by which it lives. To be buried under weight of marble, or with splendor of ceremonial, is still no more than burial; but to be remembered daily, with profitable tenderness, by the activist intelligences of the nation we have served, and to have power granted even to the shadows of the poor features, sunk into dust, still to warn, to animate, to command, as the father's brow rules and exalts the toil of his children. This is not burial, but immortality.

There is, however, another kind of portraiture, already richly introduced in the works of the Museum; the portraiture, namely, of flowers and animals, respecting which I must ask you to let me say a few selfish, no less than congratulatory words—selfish, inasmuch as they bear on this visible exposition of a principle which it has long been one of my most earnest aims to maintain. We English call ourselves a practical people; but, nevertheless, there are some of our best and most general instincts which it takes us half-centuries to put into practice. Probably no educated Englishman or Englishwoman has ever, for the last forty years, visited Scotland, with leisure on their hands, without making a pilgrimage to Melrose; nor have they ever, I suppose, accomplished the pilgrimage without singing to themselves the burden of Scott's description of the Abbey. Nor in that description (may it not also be conjectured?) do they usually feel any couplets more deeply than the—

"Spreading herbs and flowerets bright
 Glistened with the dew of night.
 No herb nor floweret glistened there
 But was carved in the cloister arches as fair."

And yet, though we are raising every year in England new examples of every kind of costly and variously intended buildings,—ecclesiastical, civil, and domestic,—none of us, through all that period, had boldness enough to put the pretty couplets into simple practice. We went on, even in the best Gothic work we attempted, clumsily copying the rudest ornaments of previous buildings; we never so much as dreamed of learning from the monks of Melrose, and seeking for help beneath the dew that sparkled on their "gude kail" garden.¹

Your Museum at Oxford is literally the first building raised in England since the close of the fifteenth century, which has fearlessly put to new trial this old faith in nature, and in the genius of the unassisted workman, who gathered out of nature the materials he needed. I am entirely glad, therefore, that you have decided on engraving for publication one of O'Shea's capitals; it will be a complete type of the whole work, in its inner meaning, and far better to show one of them in its completeness than to give any reduced sketch of the building. Nevertheless, beautiful as that capital is, and as all the rest of O'Shea's work is likely to be, it is not yet perfect Gothic sculpture; and it might give rise to dangerous error, if the admiration given to these carvings were unqualified.

I cannot, of course, enter in this letter into any discussion of the question, more and more vexed among us daily, respect-

¹ "The monks of Melrose made good kail
 On Friday, when they fasted."

The kail leaf is the one principally employed in the decorations of the abbey. (Original note to The Oxford Museum, p. 83.)

¹ This engraving, which formed the frontispiece of The Oxford Museum, will be found facing the title-page of the present volume, the original plate having proved in excellent condition. O'Shea was, together with others of his name and family, amongst the principal workmen on the building. The capital represents the following ferns: the common hart's-tongue (*scolopendrium vulgare*), the northern hard-fern (*blechnum boreale*), and the male fern (*filix mas*).

ing the due meaning and scope of conventionalism in treatment of natural form ; but I may state briefly what, I trust, will be the conclusion to which all this "vexing" will at last lead our best architects.

The highest art in all kinds is that which conveys the most truth ; and the best ornamentation possible would be the painting of interior walls with frescos by Titian, representing perfect Humanity in color ; and the sculpture of exterior walls by Phidias, representing perfect Humanity in form. Titian and Phidias are precisely alike in their conception and treatment of nature—everlasting standards of the right.

Beneath ornamentation, such as men like these could bestow, falls in various rank, according to its subordination to vulgar uses or inferior places, what is commonly conceived as ornamental art. The lower its office, and the less tractable its material, the less of nature it should contain, until a zigzag becomes the best ornament for the hem of a robe, and a mosaic of bits of glass the best design for a colored window. But all these forms of lower art are to be conventional only because they are subordinate—not because conventionalism is in itself a good or desirable thing. All right conventionalism is a wise acceptance of, and compliance with, conditions of restraint or inferiority : it may be inferiority of our knowledge or power, as in the art of a semi-savage nation ; or restraint by reason of material, as in the way the glass painter should restrict himself to transparent hue, and a sculptor deny himself the eyelash and the film of flowing hair, which he cannot cut in marble : but in all cases whatever, right conventionalism is either a wise acceptance of an inferior place, or a noble display of power under accepted limitation ; it is *not* an improvement of natural form into something better or purer than Nature herself.

Now this great and most precious principle may be compromised in two quite opposite ways. It is compromised on one side when men suppose that the degradation of a natural form which fits it for some subordinate place is an improvement of it ; and that a black profile on a red ground, because it is proper on a water-jug, is therefore an idealization of Humanity,

and nobler art than a picture of Titian. And it is compromised equally gravely on the opposite side, when men refuse to submit to the limitation of material and the fitnesses of office—when they try to produce finished pictures in colored glass, or substitute the inconsiderate imitation of natural objects for the perfectness of adapted and disciplined design.

There is a tendency in the work of the Oxford Museum to err on this last side ; unavoidable, indeed, in the present state of our art-knowledge—and less to be regretted in a building devoted to natural science than in any other : nevertheless, I cannot close this letter without pointing it out, and warning the general reader against supposing that the ornamentation of the Museum is, or can be as yet, a representation of what Gothic work will be, when its revival is complete. Far more severe,



[From "The Oxford Museum," p. 89.]

yet more perfect and lovely, that work will involve, under sterner conventional restraint, the expression not only of natural form, but of all vital and noble natural law. For the truth of decoration is never to be measured by its imita-

tive power, but by its suggestive and informative power. In the spandril of the iron-work of our roof, for instance, on p. 141, the horse-chestnut leaf and nut are used as the principal elements of form ; they are not ill-arranged, and produce a more agreeable effect than convolutions of the iron could have given, unhelpt by any reference to natural objects. Nevertheless, I do not call it an absolutely good design ; for it would have been possible, with far severer conventional treatment of the iron bars, and stronger constructive arrangement of them, to have given vigorous expression, not of the shapes of leaves and nuts only, but of their peculiar radiant or fanned expansion, and other conditions of group and growth in the tree ; which would have been just the more beautiful and interesting, as they would have arisen from deeper research into nature, and more adaptive modifying power in the designer's mind, than the mere leaf termination of a riveted scroll.

I am compelled to name these deficiencies, in order to prevent misconception of the principles we are endeavoring to enforce ; but I do not name them as at present to be avoided, or even much to be regretted. They are not chargeable either on the architect, or on the subordinate workmen ; but only on the system which has for three centuries withheld all of us from healthy study ; and although I doubt not that lovelier and juster expressions of the Gothic principle will be ultimately aimed at by us, than any which are possible in the Oxford Museum, its builders will never lose their claim to our chief gratitude, as the first guides in a right direction ; and the building itself—the first exponent of the recovered truth—will only be the more venerated the more it is excelled.

Believe me, my dear Acland,

Ever affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

[From "The Witness" (Edinburgh), September 16, 1857.]

THE CASTLE ROCK.

DUNBAR, 14th September, 1857.

To the Editor of "*The Witness*."

MY DEAR SIR: AS I was leaving Edinburgh this morning, I heard a report which gave me more concern than I can easily express, and very sufficiently spoiled the pleasure of my drive here. If there be no truth in the said report, of course take no notice of this letter; but if there be real ground for my fears, I trust you will allow me space in your columns for a few words on the subject.

The whisper—I hope I may say, the calumny—regarded certain proceedings which are taking place at the Castle. It was said to be the architect's intention to cut down into the brow of the Castle rock, in order to afford secure foundation for some new buildings.¹

Now, the Castle rock of Edinburgh is, as far as I know, simply the noblest in Scotland conveniently approachable by any creatures but sea-gulls or peewits. Ailsa and the Bass are of course more wonderful; and, I suppose, in the West Highlands there are masses of crag more wild and fantastic; but people only go to see these once or twice in their lives, while the Castle rock has a daily influence in forming the taste, or kindling the imagination, of every promising youth in Edinburgh. Even irrespectively of its position, it is a mass of singular importance among the rocks of Scotland. It is not easy to find among your mountains a "craig" of so definite a form, and on so magnificent a scale. Among the central hills of Scotland, from Ben Wyvis to the Lammermuirs, I know of none comparable to it; while, besides being bold and vast, its bars of basalt are so nobly arranged, and form a series of curves at once so majestic and harmonious, from the turf at their base to the roots of the bastions, that as long as your artists have that crag to study, I do not see that they need casts from Michael Angelo, or any one else, to teach them the laws of composition or the sources of sublimity.

¹ A new armory was to be added to the Castle.

But if you once cut into the brow of it, all is over. Disturb, in any single point, the simple lines in which the walls now advance and recede upon the tufted grass of its summit, and you may as well make a quarry of it at once, and blast away rock, Castle, and all. It admits of some question whether the changes made in the architecture of your city of late years are in every case improvements; but very certainly you cannot improve the architecture of your volcanic crags by any explosive retouches. And your error will be wholly irremediable. You may restore Trinity Chapel, or repudiate its restoration, at your pleasure, but there will be no need to repudiate restoration of the Castle rock. You cannot re-face nor re-rivet that, nor order another in a "similar style." It is a dangerous kind of engraving which you practise on so large a jewel. But I trust I am wasting my time in writing of this: I cannot believe the report, nor think that the people of Edinburgh, usually so proud of their city, are yet so unaware of what constitutes its chief nobleness, and so utterly careless of the very features of its scenery, which have been the means of the highest and purest education to their greatest men, as to allow this rock to be touched. If the works are confined to the inside of the wall, no harm will be done; but let a single buttress, or a single cleft, encumber or divide its outer brow, and there is not a man of sensibility or sense in Edinburgh who will not blush and grieve for it as long as he lives.

Believe me, my dear Sir, very faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

[From "The Witness" (Edinburgh), September 30, 1857.]

EDINBURGH CASTLE.

PENRITH, 27th September.

To the Editor of "The Witness."

MY DEAR SIR: I see by some remarks in the *Literary Gazette*¹ on the letter of mine to which you gave a place in your col-

¹ The *Literary Gazette* of September 26, 1857, after quoting a great part of the previous letter, stated that the new armory was not to be built without all due regard to the preservation of the rock, and that there was therefore no real cause for alarm.

umns of the 16th, that the design of the proposed additions to Edinburgh Castle is receiving really serious consideration. Perhaps, therefore, a few words respecting the popular but usually unprofitable business of castle-building may be of some interest to your readers. We are often a little confused in our ideas respecting the nature of a castle—properly so called. A “castle” is a fortified dwelling-house containing accommodation for as many retainers as are needed completely to defend its position. A “fortress” is a fortified military position, generally understood to be extensive enough to contain large bodies of troops. And a “citadel,” a fortified military position connected with a fortified town, and capable of holding out even if the town were taken.

It is as well to be clear on these points : for certain conditions of architecture are applicable and beautiful in each case, according to the use and character of the building ; and certain other conditions are in like manner inapplicable and ugly, because contrary to its character, and unhelpful to its use.

Now this helpfulness and unhelpfulness in architectural features depends, of course, primarily on the military practice of the time ; so that forms which were grand, because rational, before gunpowder was invented, are ignoble, because ridiculous, in days of shell and shot. The very idea and possibility of the castle proper have passed away with the arms of the middle ages. A man's house might be defended by his servants against a troop of cavalry, if its doors were solid and its battlements pierced. But it cannot be defended against a couple of field-pieces, whatever the thickness of its oak, or number of its arrow-slits.

I regret, as much as any one can regret, the loss of castellated architecture properly so called. Nothing can be more noble or interesting than the true thirteenth or fourteenth century castle, when built in a difficult position, its builder taking advantage of every inch of ground to gain more room, and of every irregularity of surface for purposes of outlook and defence ; so that the castle *sate* its rock as a strong rider sits his horse—fitting its limbs to every writhe of the flint beneath it ; and fringing the mountain promontory far into the sky with

the wild crests of its fantastic battlements. Of such castles we can see no more ; and it is just because I know them well and love them deeply that I say so. I know that their power and dignity consists, just as a soldier's consists, in their knowing and doing their work thoroughly ; in their being advanced on edge or lifted on peak of crag, not for show nor pride, but for due guard and outlook ; and that all their beautiful irregularities and apparent caprices of form are in reality their fulfillments of need, made beautiful by their compelled association with the wild strength and grace of the natural rock. All attempts to imitate them now are useless—mere girl's play. Mind, I like girl's play, and child's play, in its place, but not in the planning of military buildings. Child's play in many cases is the truest wisdom. I accept to the full the truth of those verses of Wordsworth's¹ beginning—

“ Who fancied what a pretty sight
This rock would be, if edged around
With living snowdrops ?—circlet bright !
How glorious to this orchard ground !
Was it the humor of a child ? ” etc.

But I cannot apply the same principles to more serious matters, and vary the reading of the verses into application to the works of Edinburgh Castle, thus :

“ Who fancied what a pretty sight
This rock would be, if edged around
With tiny turrets, pierced and light,
How glorious to this warlike ground ! ”

Therefore, though I do not know exactly what you have got to do in Edinburgh Castle, whatever it may be, I am certain the only right way to do it is the *plain* way. Build what is needed—chapel, barracks, or dwelling-house—in the best places, in a military point of view, of dark stone, and bomb-

¹ Poems of the Fancy, xiv. (1803). The quotation omits two lines after the fourth :

“ Who loved the little rock, and set
Upon its head this coronet ? ”

The second stanza then begins : “ Was it the humor of a child ? ” etc.

proof, keeping them low, and within the existing lines of ramparts.

That is the rational thing to do ; and the inhabitants of Edinburgh will find it in the end the picturesque thing. It would be so under any circumstances : but it is especially so in this instance ; for the grandeur of Edinburgh Castle depends eminently on the great, unbroken, yet beautifully varied parabolic curve in which it descends from the Round Tower on the Castle Hill to the terminating piece of impendent precipice on the north. It is the last grand feature of Edinburgh left as yet uninjured. You have filled up your valley with a large chimney, a mound, and an Institution ; broken in upon the Old Town with a Bank, a College, and several fires ; dwarfed the whole of Princes Street by the Scott Monument ; and cut Arthur's Seat in half by the Queen's Drive. It only remains for you to spoil the curve of your Castle, and your illustrations of the artistic principle of breadth will be complete.

It may appear at first that I depart from the rule of usefulness I have proposed, in entreating for the confinement of all buildings undertaken within the existing ramparts, in order to preserve the contour of the outside rock. But I presume that in the present state of military science, and of European politics, Edinburgh Castle is not a very important military position ; and that to make it a serviceable fortress or citadel, many additional works would be required, seriously interfering with the convenience of the inhabitants of the New Town, and with the arrangements of the Railroad Company. And, as long as these subordinate works are not carried out, I do not see any use in destroying your beautiful rock, merely to bring another gun to bear, or give accommodation to another company. But I both see, and would earnestly endeavor to advocate, the propriety of keeping the architecture of the building within those ramparts masculine and simple in style, and of not allowing a mistaken conception of picturesqueness to make a noble fortress look like a child's toy.

Believe me, my dear Sir, very faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," December 22, 1871.]

CASTLES AND KENNELS.

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph."

SIR: I was astonished the other day by your article on taverns, but never yet in my life was so much astonished by anything in print as by your to-day's article on castles.¹

I am a castle-lover of the truest sort. I do not suppose any man alive has felt anything like the sorrow or anger with which I have watched the modern destruction by railroad and manufacture, helped by the wicked improvidence of our great families, of half the national memorials of England, either actually or in effect and power of association—as Conway, for instance, now vibrating to ruin over a railroad station. For Warwick Castle, I named it in my letter of last October, in "Fors Clavigera,"² as a type of the architectural treasures of

¹The article on taverns occurred in the Daily Telegraph of the 8th December, and commented on a recent meeting of the Licensed Victuallers' Protection Society. There was also a short article upon drunkenness as a cause of crime in the Daily Telegraph of December 9—referred to by Mr. Ruskin in a letter which will be found in the second volume of this book. The article on castles concluded with an appeal for public subscriptions towards the restoration of Warwick Castle, then recently destroyed by fire.

²The passage alluded to is partly as follows: "It happened also, which was the real cause of my bias in after-life, that my father had a real love of pictures. . . . Accordingly, wherever there was a gallery to be seen, we stopped at the nearest town for the night; and in reverent manner I thus saw nearly all the noblemen's houses in England; not indeed myself at that age caring for the pictures, but much for castles and ruins, feeling more and more, as I grew older, the healthy delight of uncovetous admiration, and perceiving, as soon as I could perceive any political truth at all, that it was probably much happier to live in a small house and have Warwick Castle to be astonished at, than to live in Warwick Castle and have nothing to be astonished at; and that, at all events, it would not make Brunswick Square in the least more pleasantly habitable to pull Warwick Castle down. And, at this day, though I have kind invitations enough to visit America, I could not, even for a couple of months, live in a country so miserable as to possess no castles."

this England of ours known to me and beloved from childhood to this hour.

But, Sir, I am at this hour endeavoring to find work and food for a boy of seventeen, one of eight people—two married couples, a woman and her daughter, and this boy and his sister—who all sleep together in one room, some 18 ft. square, in the heart of London ; and you call upon me for a subscription to help to rebuild Warwick Castle.

Sir, I am an old and thoroughbred Tory, and as such I say, "If a noble family cannot rebuild their own castle, in God's name let them live in the nearest ditch till they can."

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, Dec. 20.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," December 25, 1871.]

VERONA v. WARWICK.

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph."

SIR :—Of lodging for poor and rich you will perhaps permit a further word or two from me, even in your close columns for Christmas morning. You think me inconsistent because I wanted to buy Verona, and do not want to restore Warwick.¹

I wanted, and still want, to buy Verona. I would give half my fortune to buy it for England, if any other people would help me. But I would buy it, that what is left of it might not be burned, and what is lost of it *not* restored. It would indeed be very pleasant—not to me only, but to many other sorrowful persons—if things *could* be restored when we chose. I would subscribe willingly to restore, for instance, the manger wherein the King of Judah lay cradled this day some years since, and not unwillingly to restore the poorer cradle of our English King-maker, were it possible. But for the

¹ In a second article upon the same subject the Daily Telegraph had expressed surprise at Mr. Ruskin's former letter. "Who does not remember," it wrote, "his proposal to buy Verona, so as to secure from decay the glorious monuments in it?"

making of a new manger, to be exhibited for the edification of the religious British public, I will not subscribe. No ; nor for the building of mock castles, or mock cathedrals, or mocks of anything. And the sum of what I have to say in this present matter may be put in few words.

As an antiquary—which, thank Heaven, I am—I say, “Part of Warwick Castle is burnt—’tis pity. Take better care of the rest.”

As an old Tory—which, thank Heaven, I am—I say, “Lord Warwick’s house is burned. Let Lord Warwick build a better if he can—a worse if he must ; but in any case, let him neither beg nor borrow.”

As a modern renovator and Liberal—which, thank Heaven, I am not—I would say, “By all means let the public subscribe to build a spick-and-span new Warwick Castle, and let the pictures be touched up, and exhibited by gaslight ; let the family live in the back rooms, and let there be a *table d’hôte* in the great hall at two and six every day, 2s. 6d. a head, and let us have Guy’s bowl for a dinner bell.”

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, S. E., 24th (for 25th) December.

[From “The Daily Telegraph,” January 19, 1871.]

“NOTRE DAME DE PARIS.”

To the Editor of “The Daily Telegraph.”

SIR : It may perhaps be interesting to some of your readers, in the present posture of affairs round Paris, to know, as far as I am able to tell them, the rank which the Church of Notre Dame holds among architectural and historical monuments.

Nearly every great church in France has some merit special to itself ; in other countries, one style is common to many districts ; in France, nearly every province has its unique and precious monument.

But of thirteenth-century Gothic—the most perfect archi-

tectural style north of the Alps—there is, both in historical interest, and in accomplished perfectness of art, one *unique* monument—the Sainte Chapelle of Paris.

As examples of Gothic, ranging from the twelfth to the fourteenth century, the cathedrals of Chartres, Rouen, Amiens, Rheims, and Bourges, form a kind of cinque-foil round Notre Dame of Paris, of which it is impossible to say which is the more precious petal; but any of those leaves would be worth a complete rose of any other country's work except Italy's. Nothing else in art, on the surface of the round earth, could represent any one of them, if destroyed, or be named as of any equivalent value.

Central among these, as in position, so in its school of sculpture; unequalled in that specialty but by the porch of the north transept of Rouen, and, in a somewhat later school, by the western porches of Bourges; absolutely unreplaceable as a pure and lovely source of art instruction by any future energy or ingenuity, stands—perhaps, this morning, I ought rather to write, stood'—Notre Dame of Paris.

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.

[From "The Pall Mall Gazette," March 16, 1872.]

MR. RUSKIN'S INFLUENCE: A DEFENCE.

To the Editor of "The Pall Mall Gazette."

SIR: I receive many letters just now requesting me to take notice of the new theory respecting Turner's work put forward by Dr. Liebreich in his recent lecture at the Royal Institution.¹

¹ This letter, it will be noticed, was written during the bombardment and a few days before the capitulation of Paris in 1871.

² On Friday, March 8, 1872, entitled Turner and Mulready—On the Effect of certain Faults of Vision on Painting, with especial reference to their Works. The argument of the lecturer, and distinguished oculist, was that the change of style in the pictures of Turner was due to a change in his eyes which developed itself during the last twenty years of his life. (See Proceedings of the Royal Institution, 1872, vol. vi., p. 450.)

Will you permit me to observe in your columns, once for all, that I have no time for the contradiction of the various foolish opinions and assertions which from time to time are put forward respecting Turner or his pictures? All that is necessary for any person generally interested in the arts to know about Turner was clearly stated in "Modern Painters" twenty years ago, and I do not mean to state it again, nor to contradict any contradictions of it. Dr. Liebreich is an ingenious and zealous scientific person. The public may derive much benefit from consulting him on the subject of spectacles—not on that of art.

As I am under the necessity of writing to you at any rate, may I say further that I wish your critic of Mr. Eastlake's book¹ on the Gothic revival would explain what he means by saying that my direct influence on architecture is always wrong, and my indirect influence right; because, if that be so, I will try to exercise only indirect influence on my Oxford pupils. But the fact to my own notion is otherwise. I am proud enough to hope, for instance, that I have had some

¹ A History of the Gothic Revival. By Charles L. Eastlake, F.R.I.B.A. London, Longman and Co., 1872.—In this work Mr. Eastlake had estimated very highly Mr. Ruskin's influence on modern architecture, whilst his reviewer was "disposed to say that Mr. Ruskin's direct and immediate influences had almost always been in the wrong; and his more indirect influences as often in the right." It is upon these words that Mr. Ruskin comments here, and to this comment the critic replied in a letter which appeared in the Pall Mall Gazette of the 20th inst. The main portion of his reply was as follows: "The direct influences, then, which I had principally in my mind were those which had resulted in a preference for Venetian over English Gothic, in the underrating of expressional character in architecture, and the overrating of sculptured ornament, especially of a naturalistic and imitative character, and more generally in an exclusiveness which limited the due influence of some, as I think, noble styles of architecture. By the indirect influences I meant the habit of looking at questions of architectural art in the light of imaginative ideas; the recognition of the vital importance of such questions even in their least important details; and generally an enthusiasm and activity which could have resulted from no less a force than Mr. Ruskin's wondrously suggestive genius." To this explanation Mr. Ruskin replied in his second letter on the subject.

direct influence on Mr. Street ; and I do not doubt but that the public will have more satisfaction from his Law Courts¹ than they have had from anything built within fifty years. But I have had indirect influence on nearly every cheap villa-builder between this² and Bromley ; and there is scarcely a public-house near the Crystal Palace but sells its gin and bit-ters under pseudo-Venetian capitals copied from the Church of the Madonna of Health or of Miracles. And one of my principal notions for leaving my present house is that it is surrounded everywhere by the accursed Frankenstein monsters of, indirectly, my own making.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

March 15.

[From "The Pall Mall Gazette," March 21, 1872.]

MR. RUSKIN'S INFLUENCE: A REJOINDER.

To the Editor of "The Pall Mall Gazette."

SIR: I am obliged by your critic's reply to my question, but beg to observe that, meaning what he explains himself to have meant, he should simply have said that my influence on temper was right, and on taste wrong ; the influence being in both cases equally "direct." On questions of taste I will not venture into discussion with him, but must be permitted to correct his statement that I have persuaded any one to prefer Venetian to English Gothic. I have stated that Italian—chiefly Pisan and Florentine—Gothic is the noblest school of Gothic hitherto existent, which is true ; and that one form of Venetian Gothic deserves singular respect for the manner of its development. I gave the mouldings and shaft measure-

¹ Mr. Street's design for the New Law Courts was, after much discussion, selected, May 30, 1868, and approved by commission, August, 1870. The building was not, however, begun till February, 1874, and the hope expressed in this letter is therefore, unfortunately, no expression of opinion on the work itself.

² Denmark Hill.

ments of that form,¹ and to so little purpose, that I challenge your critic to find in London, or within twenty miles of it, a single Venetian casement built on the sections which I gave as normal. For Venetian architecture developed out of British moral consciousness I decline to be answerable. His accusation that I induced architects to study sculpture more, and what he is pleased to call "expressional character" less, I admit. I should be glad if he would tell me what, before my baneful influence began to be felt, the expressional character of our building was; and I will reconsider my principles if he can point out to me, on any modern building either in London or, as aforesaid, within twenty miles round, a single piece of good sculpture of which the architect repents, or the public complains.

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.

March 21.

[From "The Liverpool Daily Post," June 9, 1877.]

MODERN RESTORATION.²

VENICE, 15th April, 1877.

MY DEAR SIR: It is impossible for any one to know the horror and contempt with which I regard modern restoration—but it is so great that it simply paralyzes me in despair,—and in the sense of such difference in all thought and feeling between me and the people I live in the midst of, almost makes it useless for me to talk to them. Of course all restoration is accursed architect's jobbery, and will go on as long as they can get their filthy bread by such business. But things are worse here than in England: you have little there

¹ See Arabian Windows in the Campo Santa Maria, Mater Domini, Plate ii. of the Examples of the Architecture of Venice, selected and drawn to measurement from the edifice, 1851. And see, too, Stones of Venice, vol. ii., chap. vii., Gothic Palaces.

² This letter was originally received by "a Liverpool gentleman," and sent inclosed in a long letter signed "An Antiquarian," to the Liverpool Daily Post.

left to lose—here, every hour is ruining buildings of inestimable beauty and historical value—simply to keep stone-lawyers' at work. I am obliged to hide my face from it all, and work at other things, or I should die of mere indignation and disgust.

Ever truly yours,

J. RUSKIN.

[From "The Kidderminster Times," July 28, 1877.]

RIBBESFORD CHURCH.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
July 24, 1877.

To the Editor of "The Kidderminster Times."

SIR: It chanced that, on the morning of the Sunday, when the appearances of danger in the walls of Ribbesford Church began seriously to manifest themselves (according to the report in your columns of the 21st inst.),² I was standing outside of the church, listening to the singing of the last hymn as the sound came through the open door (with the Archer Knight sculptured above it), and showing to the friend who had brought me to the lovely place the extreme interest of the old perpendicular traceries in the freehand working of the apertures.

Permit me to say, with reference to the proposed restoration of the church, that no modern architect, no mason either, can, or would if they could, "copy" those traceries. They will assuredly put up with geometrical models in their place, which will be no more like the old traceries than a Kensington paper pattern is like a living flower. Whatever else is added or removed, those traceries should be replaced as they are, and left

¹ An obvious misprint for "stone-layers."

² Ribbesford Church was finally closed after the morning service on Sunday, July 15, 1877. It was then restored, and was reopened and reconsecrated on June 15, 1879. The Kidderminster Times of the 21st inst. contained an account of a meeting of the Ribbesford parishioners to consider the restoration of the church. Hence the allusions in this letter to "copying" the traceries.

in reverence until they moulder away. If they are already too much decayed to hold the glass safely (which I do not believe), any framework which may be necessary can be arranged to hold the casements within them, leaving their bars entirely disengaged, and merely kept from falling by iron supports. But if these are to be "copied," why in the world cannot the congregation pay for a new and original church, to display the genius and wealth of the nineteenth century somewhere else, and leave the dear old ruin to grow gray by Severn side in peace?

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,
J. RUSKIN.

*CIRCULAR¹ RESPECTING MEMORIAL STUDIES OF ST.
MARK'S, VENICE, NOW IN PROGRESS UNDER MR.
RUSKIN'S DIRECTION.*

This circular will be given to visitors to the Old Water-color Society's Exhibition, Pall Mall East, or on application to the Fine Art Society, 148 New Bond Street.

My friends have expressed much surprise at my absence from the public meetings called in defence of St. Mark's. They cannot, however, be too clearly certified that I am now entirely unable to take part in exciting business, or even, without grave danger, to allow my mind to dwell on the subjects which, having once been dearest to it, are now the sources of acutest pain. The illness which all but killed me two years ago² was not brought on by overwork, but by grief at the course of public affairs in England, and of affairs, public and private alike, in Venice; the distress of many an old and deeply regarded friend there among the humbler classes of the city being as necessary a consequence of the modern sys-

¹ This circular, which was distributed as above noted during the winter of 1879-80, is here reprinted by Mr. Ruskin's permission, in connection with the preceding letters upon restoration in architecture. See the Notes on Prout and Hunt, 1879-80, p. 71.

² In February, 1878; see the Turner Notes of that year, and *Fora Clavigera*, New Series—Letter the Fourth, March, 1880.

tem of centralization, as the destruction of her ancient civil and religious buildings.

How far forces of this national momentum may be arrested by protest, or mollified by petition, I know not; what in either kind I have felt myself able to do has been done two years since, in conjunction with one of the few remaining representatives of the old Venetian noblesse.¹ All that now remains for me is to use what time may be yet granted for such record as hand and heart can make of the most precious building in Europe, standing yet in the eyes of men and the sunshine of heaven.

The drawing of the first two arches of the west front, now under threat of restoration, which, as an honorary member of the Old Water-color Society, I have the privilege of exhibiting in its rooms this year, shows with sufficient accuracy the actual state of the building, and the peculiar qualities of its architecture.² The principles of that architecture are analyzed at length in the second volume of the "Stones of Venice," and the whole façade described there with the best care I could, in hope of directing the attention of English architects to the forms of Greek sculpture which enrich it.³ The words have been occasionally read for the sound of them; and perhaps, when the building is destroyed, may be some day, with amazement, perceived to have been true.

In the mean time, the drawing just referred to, every touch of it made from the building, and left as the color dried in the spring mornings of 1877, will make clear some of the points chiefly insisted on in the "Stones of Venice," and which are of yet more importance now.⁴ Of these, the first and main

¹ Count Alvise Piero Zorzi, the author of an admirable and authoritative essay on the restoration of St. Mark's (Venice, 1877).

² This drawing (No. 28 in the Exhibition) was of a small portion of the west front.

³ *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii., chapter 4, of original edition, and vol. i., chapter 4, of the smaller edition for the use of travellers.

⁴ In the first edition of this circular this sentence ran as follows: "In the mean time, with the aid of the drawing just referred to, every touch of it from the building, and left, as the color dried in the morning light of the 10th May, 1877, some of the points chiefly insisted on in the 'Stones of Venice,' are of importance now."

ones are the exquisite delicacy of the work and perfection of its preservation to this time. It seems to me that the English visitor never realizes thoroughly what it is that he looks at in the St. Mark's porches: its glittering confusion in a style unexampled, its bright colors, its mingled marbles, produce on him no real impression of age, and its diminutive size scarcely any of grandeur. It looks to him almost like a stage scene, got up solidly for some sudden festa. No mere guide-book's passing assertion of date—this century or the other—can in the least make him even conceive, and far less feel, that he is actually standing before the very shafts and stones that were set on their foundations here while Harold the Saxon stood by the grave of the Confessor under the fresh-raised vaults of the first Norman Westminster Abbey, of which now a single arch only remains standing. He cannot, by any effort, imagine that those exquisite and lace-like sculptures of twined acanthus—every leaf-edge as sharp and fine as if they were green weeds fresh springing in the dew, by the *Pan-droseion*¹—were, indeed, cut and finished to their perfect grace while the Norman axes were hewing out rough zigzags and dentils round the aisles of Durham and Lindisfarne. Or nearer, in what is left of our own Canterbury—it is but an hour's journey in pleasant Kent—you may compare, almost as if you looked from one to the other, the grim grotesque of the block capitals in the crypt with the foliage of these flexile ones, and with their marble doves—scarcely distinguishable from the living birds that nestle between them. Or, going down two centuries (for the fillings of the portico arches were not completed till after 1204), what thirteenth-century work among our gray limestone walls can be thought of as wrought in the same hour with that wreath of intertwined white marble, relieved by gold, of which the tenderest and sharpest lines of the pencil cannot finely enough express the surfaces and undulations? For indeed, without and within, St. Mark's is not, in the real nature of it, a piece of architecture, but a jewelled casket and painted reliquary, chief of the treasures of what were once the world's treasures of sacred things, the kingdoms of Christendom.

¹ Printed "*Pan-choreion*" in the first edition.

A jewelled casket, every jewel of which was itself sacred. Not a slab of it, nor a shaft, but has been brought from the churches descendants of the great Seven of Asia, or from the Christian Greek of Corinth, Crete, and Thrace, or the Christian-Israelite in Palestine—the central archivolt copied from that of the church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the opposing lions or phoenixes of its sculptures from the treasury of Atreus and the citadel of Tyre.

Thus, beyond all measure of value as a treasury of art, it is also, beyond all other volumes, venerable as a codex of religion. Just as the white foliage and birds on their golden ground are descendants, in direct line, from the ivory and gold of Phidias, so the Greek pictures and inscriptions, whether in mosaic or sculpture, throughout the building, record the unbroken unity of spiritual influence from the Father of light—or the races whose own poets had said “We also are his offspring”—down to the day when all their gods, not slain, but changed into new creatures, became the types to them of the mightier Christian spirits; and Perseus became St. George, and Mars St. Michael, and Athena the Madonna, and Zeus their revealed Father in Heaven.

In all the history of human mind, there is nothing so wonderful, nothing so eventful, as this spiritual change. So inextricably is it interwoven with the most divine, the most distant threads of human thought and effort, that while none of the thoughts of St. Paul or the visions of St. John can be understood without our understanding first the imagery familiar to the Pagan worship of the Greeks; on the other hand, no understanding of the real purport of Greek religion can be securely reached without watching the translation of its myths into the message of Christianity.

Both by the natural temper of my mind, and by the labor of forty years given to this subject in its practical issues on the present state¹ of Christendom, I have become, in some

¹ For “state,” the first edition reads “mind,” and for “have become, in some measure, able,” it has “have qualified myself.” So again for “am at this moment aided,” it reads “am asked, and enabled to do so.”

measure, able both to show and to interpret these most precious sculptures ; and my health has been so far given back to me that if I am at this moment aided, it will, so far as I can judge, be easily possible for me to complete the work so long in preparation. There will yet, I doubt not, be time to obtain perfect record of all that is to be destroyed. I have entirely honest and able draughtsmen at my command ; my own resignation¹ of my Oxford Professorship has given me leisure ; and all that I want from the antiquarian sympathy of England is so much instant help as may permit me, while yet in available vigor of body and mind, to get the records made under my own overseership, and registered for sufficient and true. The casts and drawings which I mean to have made will be preserved in a consistent series in my Museum at Sheffield, where I have freehold ground enough to build a perfectly lighted gallery for their reception. I have used the words "I want," as if praying this thing for myself. It is not so. If only some other person could and would undertake all this, Heaven knows how gladly I would leave the task to him. But there is no one else at present able to do it : if not now by me, it can never be done more. And so I leave it to the reader's grace.

J. RUSKIN.

All subscriptions to be sent to Mr. G. ALLEN, Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent.

POSTSCRIPT.*

By the kindness of the Society of Painters in Water-colors I am permitted this year, in view of the crisis of the fate of the façade of St. Mark's, to place in the Exhibition-room of the Society ten photographs, illustrative of its past and present state. I have already made use of them, both in my lectures at Oxford and in the parts of *Fors Clavigera* intended for Art-teaching at my Sheffield Museum ; and all but the eighth are obtainable from my assistant, Mr. Ward (2 Church Terrace,

¹ Early in 1879.

* Printed in the second edition only.

Richmond), who is my general agent for photographs, either taken under my direction (as here, Nos. 4, 9, and 10,) or specially chosen by me for purposes of Art Education. The series of views here shown are all perfectly taken, with great clearness, from the most important points, and give, consecutively, complete evidence respecting the façade.

They are arranged in the following order :

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. THE CENTRAL PORCH. | } <i>Arranged in one frame.</i> |
| 2. THE TWO NORTHERN PORCHES. | |
| 3. THE TWO SOUTHERN PORCHES. | |
| 4. THE NORTHERN PORTICO. | |
| 5. THE SOUTHERN PORTICO. | <i>Before restoration.</i> |
| 6. THE WEST FRONT, IN PERSPECTIVE. | <i>Seen from the North.</i> |
| 7. THE WEST FRONT, IN PERSPECTIVE. | <i>Seen from the South.</i> |
| 8. THE SOUTH SIDE. | <i>Before restoration.</i> |
| 9. DETAIL OF CENTRAL ARCHIVOLT. | |
| 10. THE CROSS OF THE MERCHANTS OF VENICE. | |

This last photograph is not of St. Mark's, but is of the inscription which I discovered, in 1877, on the Church of St. James of the Rialto. It is of the 9th or 10th century (according to the best antiquarians of Venice), and is given in this series, first, to confirm the closing paragraph in my notes on the Prout drawings in Bond Street ;¹ and secondly, to show

¹ The reference is to the closing paragraph of the Preface to the Notes, which runs as follows: "Athena, observe, of the Agora, or Market Place. And St. James of the Deep Stream or Market River. The Angels of Honest Sale and Honest Portage ; such honest portage being the grandeur of the Grand Canal, and of all other canals, rivers, sounds, and seas that ever moved in wavering morris under the night. And the eternally electric light of the embankment of that Rialto stream was shed upon it by the Cross—know you that for certain, you dwellers by high-embanked and steamer-burdened Thames. And learn from your poor wandering painter this lesson—for the sum of the best he had to give you (it is the Alpha of the Laws of true human life)—that no city is prosperous in the sight of Heaven, unless the peasant sells in its market—adding this lesson of Gentile Bellini's for the Omega, that no city is ever righteous in the Sight of Heaven unless the Noble walks in its street."—Notes on Prout and Hunt, p. 44.

the perfect preservation even of the hair-strokes in letters carved in the Istrian marble used at Venice a thousand years ago. The inscription on the cross is—

“Sit crux vera salus huic tua Christe loco.”
(Be Thy Cross, O Christ, the true safety of this place.)

And on the band beneath—

“Hoc circa templum sit jus mercantibus æquum,
Pondera nec vergant nec sit conventio prava.”
(Around this temple let the merchants' law be just,
Their weights true, and their contracts fair.)

The bearing of this inscription on the relations of Antonio to Shylock may perhaps not be perceived by a public which now—consistently and naturally enough, but ominously—considers Shylock a victim to the support of the principles of legitimate trade, and Antonio a “speculator and sentimentalist.” From the series of photographs of St. Mark's itself, I cannot but think even the least attentive observer must receive one strong impression—that of the singular preservation of the minutest details in its sculpture. Observe, this is a quite separate question from the *stability* of the fabric. In our northern cathedrals the stone, for the most part, moulders away; and the restorer usually replaces it by fresh sculpture, on the faces of walls of which the mass is perfectly secure. Here, at St. Mark's, on the contrary, the only possible pretence for restoration has been, and is, the alleged insecurity of the masses of inner wall—the external sculptures remaining in faultless perfection, so far as unaffected by direct human violence. Both the Greek and Istrian marbles used at Venice are absolutely defiant of hypæthral influences, and the edges of their delicatest sculpture remain to this day more sharp than if they had been cut in steel—for then they would have rusted away. It is especially, for example, of this quality that I have painted the ornament of the St. Jean d'Acre pillars, No. 107, which the reader may at once compare with the daguerrotype (No. 108) beside it, which are exhibited, with the Prout

and Hunt drawings, at the Fine Art Society's rooms.¹ These pillars are known to be not later than the sixth century, yet wherever external violence has spared their decoration it is sharp as a fresh-growing thistle. Throughout the whole façade of St. Mark's, the capitals have only here and there by casualty lost so much as a volute or an acanthus leaf, and whatever remains is perfect as on the day it was set in its place, mellowed and subdued only in color by time, but white still, clearly white; and gray, still softly gray; its porphyry purple as an Orleans plum, and the serpentine as green as a greengage. Note also, that in this throughout perfect decorated surface there is not a loose joint. The appearances of dislocation, which here and there look like yielding of masonry, are merely carelessness in the replacing or resetting of the marble armor at the different times when the front has been retouched—in several cases quite wilful freaks of arrangement. The slope of the porphyry shaft, for instance, on the angle at the left of my drawing, looks like dilapidation. Were it really so, the building would be a heap of ruins in twenty-four hours. These porches sustain no weight above—their pillars carry merely an open gallery; and the inclination of the red marble pilasters at the angle is not yielding at all, but an originally capricious adjustment of the marble armor. It will be seen that the investing marbles between the arch and pilaster are cut to the intended inclination, which brings the latter nearly into contact with the upper archivolt; the appearance of actual contact being caused by the projection of the dripstone. There are, indeed, one or two leaning towers in Venice whose foundations have partly yielded; but if *anything* were in danger on St. Mark's Place, it would be the campanile—three hundred feet high—and not the little shafts and galleries within reach—too easy reach—of the gaslighter's ladder. And the only dilapidations I have myself seen on this porch, since I first drew it forty-six years ago, have been, first, those caused by the insertion of the lamps themselves, and then the breaking away of the marble network of the main capital by the habitual

¹ See the Notes on Prout and Hunt, p. 78.

clattering of the said gaslighter's ladder against it. A piece of it which I saw so broken off, and made an oration over to the passers-by in no less broken Italian, is in my mineral cabinet at Brantwood.

Before leaving this subject of the inclined angle, let me note—usefully, though not to my present purpose—that the entire beauty of St. Mark's campanile depends on this structure, there definitely seen to be one of real safety. This grace and apparent strength of the whole mass would be destroyed if the sides of it were made vertical. In Gothic towers, the same effect is obtained by the retiring of the angle buttresses, without actual inclination of any but the coping lines.

In the Photograph No. 5 the slope of the angles in the correspondent portico, as it stood before restoration, is easily visible and measurable, the difference being, even on so small a scale, full the twentieth of an inch between the breadth at base and top, at the angles, while the lines bearing the inner arch are perfectly vertical.

There was, indeed, as will be seen at a glance, some displacement of the pillars dividing the great window above, immediately to the right of the portico. But these pillars were exactly the part of the south front which carried no weight. The arch above them is burdened only by its own fringes of sculpture: and the pillars carried only the bit of decorated panelling, which is now bent—not outwards, as it would have been by pressure, but inwards. The arch has not subsided; it was always of the same height as the one to the right of it (the Byzantine builders throwing their arches always in whatever lines they chose); nor is there a single crack or displacement in the sculpture of the investing fringe.

In No. 3 (to the right hand in the frame) there is dilapidation and danger enough certainly; but that is wholly caused by the savage and brutal carelessness with which the restored parts are joined to the old. The photograph bears deadly and perpetual witness against the system of "making work," too well known now among English as well as Italian operatives; but it bears witness, as deadly, against the alleged accuracy of the restoration itself. The ancient dentils are

bold, broad, and cut with the free hand, as all good Greek work is; the new ones, little more than half their size, are cut with the servile and horrible rigidity of the modern mechanic.

This quality is what M. Meduna, in the passage quoted from his defence of himself¹ in the *Standard*, has at once the dulness and the audacity actually to boast of as "*plus exacte*"!

Imagine a Kensington student set to copy a picture by Velasquez, and substituting a Nottingham lace pattern, traced with absolute exactness, for the painter's sparkle and flow and flame, and boasting of his improvements as "*plus exacte*"! That is precisely what the Italian restorer does for *his* original; but, alas! he has the inestimable privilege also of destroying the original; as he works, and putting his student's caricature in its place! Nor are any words bitter or contemptuous enough to describe the bestial stupidities which have thus already replaced the floor of the church, in my early days the loveliest in Italy, and the most sacred.

In the Photograph No. 7 there is, and there only, *one* piece of real dilapidation—the nodding pinnacle propped on the right. Those pinnacles stand over the roof gutters, and their bracket supports are, of course, liable to displacement, if the gutters get choked by frost or otherwise neglected. The pinnacle is not ten feet high, and can be replaced and secured as easily as the cowl on a chimney-pot. The timbers underneath were left there merely to give the wished-for appearance of repairs going on. They defaced the church front through the whole winter of 1876. I copied the bills stuck on them one Sunday, and they are printed in the 78th number of *Fors Clavigera*, the first being the announcement of the Reunited agencies for information on all matters of commercial enterprise and speculation, and the last the announcement of the loss of a cinnamon-colored little bitch, with rather long ears (*coll'orecchie piuttosto lunghe*). I waited through the winter to see how much the Venetians really cared for the look of their

¹ See the *Standard* (Dec. 3, 1879). M. Meduna was the architect who carried out the "restoration" of the south façade of the Cathedral.

church ; but lodged a formal remonstrance in March with one of the more reasonable civic authorities, who presently had them removed. The remonstrance ought, of course, to have come from the clergy ; but they contented themselves with cutting flower-wreaths on paper to hang over the central door at Christmas-time. For the rest, the pretence of rottenness in the walls is really too gross to be answered. There are brick buildings in Italy by tens of thousands, Roman, Lombardic, Gothic, on all scales and in all exposures. Which of them has rotted or fallen, but by violence ? Shall the tower of Garisenda stand, and the Campanile of Verona, and the tower of St. Mark's, and, forsooth, this little fifty feet of un-weighted wall be rotten and dangerous ?

Much more I could say, and show ; but the certainty of the ruin of poor Bedlamite Venice is in her own evil will, and not to be averted by any human help or pleading. Her *Sabba delle streghe* has truly come ; and in her own words (see *Fors*, letter 77th) ; “ Finalmente la Piazza di S. Marco sar invasa e completamente illuminata dalle Fiamme di Belzebù. Perchè il *Sabba* possa riuscire più completo, si raccomanda a tutti gli spettatori di fischiare durante le fiamme come anime dannate.”

Meantime, in what Saturday pause may be before this Witches' Sabbath, if I have, indeed any English friends, let them now help me, and my fellow-workers, to get such casts, and colorings, and measurings, as may be of use in time to come. I am not used to the begging tone, and will not say more than that what is given me will go in mere daily bread to the workers, and that next year, if I live, there shall be some exposition of what we have got done, with the best account I can render of its parts and pieces. Fragmentary enough they must be,—poor fallen plumes of the winged lion's wings,—yet I think I can plume a true shaft or two with them yet.

Some copies of the second edition of this circular had printed at the top of its last and otherwise blank page the words, “ *Present State of Subscription Lists :—*,” a printer's error, mistaken by some readers for a piece of dry humor.

Subscriptions were collected by Mr. G. Allen, as above intimated, and also by Mr. F. W. Pullen, secretary to the Ruskin Society of Manchester, under the authority of the following letter, which was printed and distributed by him : "*November 29, 1879.*—DEAR MR. PULLEN : I am very glad to have your most satisfactory letter, and as gladly give you authority to receive subscriptions for drawings and sculptures of St. Mark's. Mr. Bunney's large painting of the whole west façade, ordered by me a year and a half ago, and in steady progress ever since, is to be completed this spring. It was a £500 commission for the Guild, but I don't want to have to pay it with Guild capital. I have the power of getting casts, also, in places where nobody else can, and have now energy enough to give directions, but can no more pay for them out of my own pocket. Ever gratefully yours, J. R. As a formal authority, this had better have my full signature—JOHN RUSKIN." In a further letter to Manchester on the subject, Mr. Ruskin wrote as follows : "It is wholly impossible for me at present to take any part in the defence—at last, though far too late—undertaken by the true artists and scholars of England—of the most precious Christian building in Europe ; . . . nor is there any occasion that I should, if only those who care for me will refer to what I have already written, and will accept from me the full ratification of all that was said by the various speakers, all without exception men of the most accurate judgment and true feeling, at the meeting held in Oxford. All that I think necessary for you to lay, directly from myself, before the meeting you are about to hold, is the explicit statement of two facts of which I am more distinctly cognizant from my long residences in Italy at different periods, and in Venice during these last years than any other person can be—namely, the Infidel—(malignantly and scornfully Infidel and anti-religionist) aim of Italian 'restoration'—and the totality of the destruction it involves, of whatever it touches." So again, in a second and despairing letter, he wrote : "You cannot be too strongly assured of the total destruction involved, in the restoration of St. Mark's. . . . Then the plague of it all is, What can you do? Nothing would be effectual, but the appointment of a Procurator of St. Mark's, with an enormous salary, dependent on the Church's being let alone. What you can do by a meeting at Manchester, I have no notion. The only really practical thing that I can think of would be sending me lots of money to spend in getting all the drawings I can of the old thing before it goes. I don't believe we can save it by

any protests." See the *Birmingham Daily Mail*, Nov. 27, 1879. The reader is also referred to "Fors Clavigera," New Series, Letter the Fourth, pp. 289-90.

The meeting in Oxford alluded to above was held in the Sheldonian Theatre on November 15, 1879. Among the principal speakers were the Dean of Christ Church (in the chair), Dr. Acland, the Professor of Fine Art (Mr. W. B. Richmond), Mr. Street, Mr. William Morris, and Mr. Burne Jones.

LETTERS ON SCIENCE.

I.—GEOLOGICAL.

[From "The Reader," November 12, 1864.]

THE CONFORMATION OF THE ALPS.

DENMARK HILL, 10th November, 1864.

My attention has but now been directed to the letters in your October numbers on the subject of the forms of the Alps.¹ I have, perhaps, some claim to be heard on this question, having spent, out of a somewhat busy life, eleven summers and two winters (the winter work being especially useful, owing to the definition of inaccessible ledges of strata by new-fallen snow) in researches among the Alps, directed solely to the questions of their external form and its mechanical causes; while I left to other geologists the more disputable and difficult problems of relative ages of beds.

I say "more disputable" because, however complex the phases of mechanical action, its general nature admits, among the Alps, of no question. The forms of the Alps are quite *visibly* owing to the action (how gradual or prolonged cannot yet be determined) of elevatory, contractile, and expansive forces, followed by that of currents of water at various temperatures, and of prolonged disintegration—ice having had small share in modifying even the higher ridges, and none in causing or forming the valleys.

¹ The Reader of October 15 contained an article "On the Conformation of the Alps," to which in the following issue of the journal (October 22) Sir Roderick Murchison replied in a letter dated "Torquay, 16th October," and entitled "On the Excavation of Lake-Basins in solid rocks by Glaciers," the possibility of which he altogether denied.

The reason of the extreme difficulty in tracing the combination of these several operative causes in any given instance, is that the effective and destructive drainage by no means follows the leading fissures, but tells fearfully on the softer rocks, sweeping away inconceivable volumes of these, while fissures or faults in the harder rocks of quite primal structural importance may be little deepened or widened, often even unindicated, by subsequent aqueous action. I have, however, described at some length the commonest structural and sculptural phenomena in the fourth volume of "*Modern Painters*," and I gave a general sketch of the subject last year in my lecture¹ at the Royal Institution (fully reported in the *Journal de Genève* of 2d September, 1863), but I have not yet thrown together the mass of material in my possession, because our leading chemists are only now on the point of obtaining some data for the analysis of the most important of all forces—that of the consolidation and crystallization of the metamorphic rocks, causing them to alter their bulk and exercise irresistible and irregular pressures on neighboring or incumbent beds.

But, even on existing data, the idea of the excavation of valleys by ice has become one of quite ludicrous untenableness. At this moment, the principal glacier in Chamouni pours itself down a slope of twenty degrees or more over a rock two thousand feet in vertical height; and just at the bottom of this ice-cataract, where a water-cataract of equal power would have excavated an almost fathomless pool, the ice simply accumulates a heap of stones, on the top of which it rests.

The lakes of any hill country lie in what are the isolated lowest (as its summits are the isolated highest) portions of its broken surface, and ice no more engraves the one than it builds the other. But how these hollows were indeed first

¹ "On the Forms of the Stratified Alps of Savoy," delivered on June 5, 1863. The subject was treated under three heads. 1. The material of the Savoy Alps. 2. The mode of their formation. 3. The mode of their subsequent sculpture. (See the report of the lecture in the *Proceedings of the Royal Institution*, 1863, vol., iv., p. 142. It was also printed by the Institution in a separate form, p. 4.)

dug, we know as yet no more than how the Atlantic was dug ; and the hasty expression by geologists of their fancies in such matters cannot be too much deprecated, because it deprives their science of the respect really due to it in the minds of a large portion of the public, who know, and *can* know, nothing of its established principles, while they can easily detect its speculative vanity. There is plenty of work for us all to do, without losing time in speculation ; and when we have got good sections across the entire chain of the Alps, at intervals of twenty miles apart, from Nice to Innspruch, and exhaustive maps and sections of the lake-basins of Lucerne, Annecy, Como, and Garda, we shall have won the leisure, and may assume the right, to try our wits on the formative question.

J. RUSKIN.¹

[From "The Reader," November 26, 1864.]

CONCERNING GLACIERS.

DENMARK HILL, *November 21.*

I AM obliged to your Scottish correspondent for the courtesy with which he expresses himself towards me ; and, as his letter refers to several points still (to my no little surprise) in dispute among geologists, you will perhaps allow me to occupy, in reply, somewhat more of your valuable space than I had intended to ask for.

I say "to my no little surprise," because the great principles of glacial action have been so clearly stated by their discoverer, Forbes, and its minor phenomena (though in an envious temper, which, by its bitterness, as a pillar of salt, has become the sorrowful monument of the discovery it

¹ In reply to this letter, the Reader of November 19, 1864, published one from a Scottish correspondent, signed "Tain Caimbeul," the writer of which declared that, whilst he looked on Mr. Ruskin "as a thoroughly reliable guide in all that relates to the external aspects of the Alps," he could not "accept his leadership in questions of political economy or the mechanics of glacier motion."

denies)¹ so carefully described by Agassiz, that I never thought there would be occasion for much talk on the subject henceforward. As much as seems now necessary to be said I will say as briefly as I can.

What a river carries fast at the bottom of it, a glacier carries slowly at the top of it. This is the main distinction between their agencies. A piece of rock which, falling into a strong torrent, would be perhaps swept down half a mile in twenty minutes, delivering blows on the rocks at the bottom audible like distant heavy cannon,* and at last dashed into fragments, which in a little while will be rounded pebbles (having done enough damage to everything it has touched in its course)—this same rock, I say, falling on a glacier, lies on the top of it, and is thereon carried down, if at fullest speed, at the rate of three yards in a week, doing usually damage to nothing at all. That is the primal difference between the work of water and ice; these further differences, however, follow from this first one.

Though a glacier never rolls its moraine into pebbles, as a torrent does its shingle, it torments and teases the said moraine very sufficiently, and without intermission. It is always moving it on, and melting from under it, and one stone is always toppling, or tilting, or sliding over another, and one company of stones crashing over another, with staggering shift of heap behind. Now, leaving out of all account the pulverulent effect of original precipitation to glacier level from two or three thousand feet above, let the reader imagine a mass of sharp granite road-metal and paving stones, mixed up with boulders of any size he can think of, and with wreck of softer rocks (micaceous schists in quantities, usually), the whole, say, half a quarter of a mile wide, and of variable thickness, from

* Even in lower Apennine, "*Dat sonitum saxis, et torto vertice torrens.*"²

¹ See below, Forbes: his real greatness, pp. 182 *seqq.*, and the references given in the notes there.

² Virgil, *Æneid*, vii. 567.

mere skin-deep mock-moraine on mounds of unsuspected ice—treacherous, shadow-begotten—to a railroad embankment, *passenger*-embankment, one eternal collapse of unconditional ruin, rotten to its heart with frost and thaw (in regions on the edge of each), and withering sun and waste of oozing ice; fancy all this heaved and shovelled, slowly, by a gang of a thousand Irish laborers, twenty miles downhill. You will conjecture there may be some dust developed on the way?—some at the hill bottom? Yet thus you will have but a dim idea of the daily and final results of the movements of glacier moraines—beautiful result in granite and slate dust, delivered by the torrent at last in banks of black and white slime, recovering itself, far away, into fruitful fields, and level floor for human life.

Now all this is utterly independent of any action whatsoever by the ice on its sustaining rocks. It *has* an action on these indeed; but of this limited nature as compared with that of water. A stone at the bottom of a stream, or deep-sea current, necessarily and always presses on the bottom with the weight of the column of water above it—plus the excess of its own weight above that of a bulk of water equal to its own; but a stone under a glacier may be hitched or suspended in the ice itself for long spaces, not touching bottom at all. When dropped at last, the weight of ice may not come upon it for years, for that weight is only carried on certain spaces of the rock bed; and in those very spaces the utmost a stone can do is to press on the bottom with the force necessary to drive the given stone into ice of a given density (usually porous): and, with this maximum pressure, to move at the maximum rate of about a third of an inch in a quarter of an hour! Try to saw a piece of marble through (with edge of iron, not of soppy ice, for saw, and with sharp flint sand for felspar slime), and move your saw at the rate of an inch in three-quarters of an hour, and see what lively and progressive work you will make of it!

I say “a piece of marble;” but your permanent glacier-bottom is rarely so soft—for a glacier, though it acts slowly by friction, can act vigorously by dead-weight on a soft rock, and

(with fall previously provided for it) can clear masses of that out of the way, to some purpose. There is a notable instance of this in the rock of which your correspondent speaks, under the Glacier des Bois. His idea, that the glacier is deep above and thins out below, is a curious instance of the misconception of glacier nature, from which all that Forbes has done cannot yet quite clear the public mind, nor even the geological mind. A glacier never, in a large sense, thins out at all as it expires. It flows level everywhere for its own part, and never slopes but down a slope, as a rapid in water. Pour out a pot of the thickest old white candied, but still fluent, honey you can buy, over a heap of stones, arranged as you like, to imitate rocks.¹ Whatever the honey does on a small scale, the glacier does on a large; and you may thus study the glacier phenomena of current—though, of course, not those of structure or fissure—at your ease. But note this specially: When the honey is at last at rest, in whatever form it has taken, you will see it terminates in tongues with low rounded edges. The possible height of these edges, in any fluid, varies as its viscosity; it is some quarter of an inch or so in water on dry ground; the most fluent ice will stand at about a hundred feet. Next, from this outer edge of the stagnant honey, delicately skim or thin off a little at the top, and see what it will do. It will not stand in an inclined plane, but fill itself up again to a level from behind. Glacier ice does exactly the same thing; and this filling in from behind is done so subtly and delicately that, every winter, the whole glacier surface rises to replace the summer's waste, not with progressive wave, as "twice a day the Severn fills;" but with silent, level insurrection, as of ocean-tide, the gray sea-crystal passes by. And all the structural phenomena of the ice are modified by this mysterious action.

Your correspondent is also not aware that the Glacier des Bois gives a very practical and outspoken proof of its shallowness opposite the Montanvert. Very often its torrent, under wilful touch of Lucina-sceptre, leaps to the light at the top of

¹ See Deucalion, vol. i. p. 93.

the rocks instead of their base.¹ That fiery Arveron, sometimes, hearing from reconnoitring streamlets of a nearer way down to the valley than the rounded ice-curve under the Chapeau, fairly takes bit in teeth, and flings itself out over the brow of the rocks, and down a ravine in them, in the wildest cataract of white-thunder-clouds (endless in thunder, and with quiet fragments of rainbow for lightning), that I have ever blinded myself in the skirts of.

These bare rocks, over which the main river sometimes falls (and outlying streamlets always) are of firm-grained, massively rounded gneiss. Above them, I have no doubt, once extended the upper covering of fibrous and amianthoidal schist, which forms the greater part of the south-eastern flank of the valley of Chamouni. The schistose gneiss is continuous in direction of bed, with the harder gneiss below. But the outer portion is soft, the inner hard, and more granitic. This outer portion the descending glaciers have always stripped right off down to the hard gneiss below, and in places, as immediately above the Montanvert (and elsewhere at the brows of the valley), the beds of schistose gneiss are crushed and bent outwards in a mass (I believe) by the weight of the old glacier, for some fifty feet within their surface. This looks like work ; and work of this sort when it had to be done, the glaciers were well up to, bearing down such soft masses as a strong man bends a poplar sapling ; but by steady push far more than by friction. You may bend or break your sapling with bare hands, but try to rub its bark off with your bare hands !

When once the ice, *with strength always dependent on pre-existent precipice*, has cleared such obstacles out of its way, and made its bed to its liking, there is an end to its manifest and effectively sculptural power. I do not believe the Glacier des Bois has done more against some of the granite surfaces

¹ There twice a day the Severn fills ;
The salt sea-water passes by,
And hushes half the babbling Wye,
And makes a silence in the hills.

TENNYSON, "In Memoriam," xix.

beneath it, for these four thousand years, than the drifts of desert sand have done on Sinai. Be that as it may, its power of excavation on a level is proved, as I showed in my last letter, to be zero. Your correspondent thinks the glacier power vanishes towards the extremity; but as long as the ice exists, it has the same progressive energy, and, indeed, sometimes, with the quite terminal nose of it, will plough a piece of ground scientifically enough; but it never digs a hole: the stream always comes from under it full speed downhill. Now, whatever the dimensions of a glacier, if it dug a big hole, like the Lake of Geneva, when it was big, it would dig a little hole when it was little—not that this is *always* safe logic, for a little stone will dig in a glacier, and a large one build; but it is safe within general limits—which it never does, nor can, but subsides gladly into any hole prepared for it in a quite placid manner, for all its fierce looks.

I find it difficult to stop, for your correspondent, little as he thinks it, has put me on my own ground. I was *forced* to write upon Art by an accident (the public abuse of Turner) when I was two-and-twenty; but I had written a “Mineralogical Dictionary” as far as C, and invented a shorthand symbolism for crystalline forms, before I was fourteen: and have been at stony work ever since, as I could find time, silently, not caring to speak much till the chemists had given me more help.¹ For, indeed, I strive, as far as may be, not to speak of anything till I know it; and in that matter of Political Economy also (though forced in like manner to write of that by unendurable circumfluent fallacy), I know my ground; and if your present correspondent, or any other, will meet me fairly, I will give them uttermost satisfaction upon any point they doubt. There is free challenge; and in the knight of Snowdoun’s vows (looking first carefully to see that the rock be not a glacier boulder),

“This rock shall fly
From its firm base, as soon as I.”

J. RUSKIN.²

¹ See Deucalion, vol. i. p. 3 (Introduction).

² Following this letter in the same number of the Reader was one

ENGLISH VERSUS ALPINE GEOLOGY.

[From "The Reader," December 3, 1864.]

DENMARK HILL, 29th Nov.

I SCARCELY know what reply to make, or whether it is necessary to reply at all, to the letter of Mr. Jukes in your last number. There is no antagonism between his views and mine, though he seems heartily to desire that there should be, and with no conceivable motive but to obtain some appearance of it suppresses the latter half of the sentence he quotes from my letter.¹ It is true that he writes in willing ignorance of the Alps, and I in unwilling ignorance of the Wicklow hills ; but the only consequent discrepancy of thought or of impression between us is, that Mr. Jukes, examining (by his own account) very old hills, which have been all but washed away to nothing, naturally, and rightly, attributes their present form, or want of form, to their prolonged ablutions, while I, examining new and lofty hills, of which, though much has been carried away, much is still left, as naturally and rightly ascribe a great part of their aspect to the modes of their elevation. The Alp-bred geologist has, however, this advantage, that (especially if he happen at spare times to have been interested in manual arts) he can hardly overlook the effects of denudation on a mountain-chain which sustains Venice on the delta of one of its torrents, and Antwerp on that of another ; but the English geologist, however practised in the detection and measurement of faults filled in by cubes of fluor, may be pardoned for dimly appreciating the structure of a district in

from the well-known geologist Mr. Joseph Beete Jukes, F.R.S., who, writing from "Selly Oak, Birmingham, Nov. 22," described as "the originator of the discussion." He therefore was no doubt the author of the article in the Reader alluded to above (p. 176, note). Mr. Jukes died in 1869.

¹ The following is the sentence from Mr. Jukes' letter alluded to : "Therefore when Mr. Ruskin says that 'the forms of the Alps are quite visibly owing to the action of elevatory, contractile, and expansive forces,' I would entreat him to listen to those who have had their vision corrected by the laborious use of chain and theodolite and protractor for many toilsome years over similar forms."

which a people strong enough to lay the foundation of the liberties of Europe in a single battle,¹ was educated in a fissure of the Lower Chalk.

I think, however, that, if Mr. Jukes can succeed in allaying his feverish thirst for battle, he will wish to withdraw the fourth paragraph of his letter,² and, as a general formula, even the scheme which it introduces. That scheme, sufficiently accurate as an expression of one cycle of geological action, contains little more than was known to all leading geologists five-and-twenty years ago, when I was working hard under Dr. Buckland at Oxford;³ and it is so curiously unworthy of the present state of geological science, that I believe its author, in his calmer moments, will not wish to attach his name to an attempt at generalization at once so narrow, and so audacious. My experience of mountain-form is probably as much more extended than his, as my disposition to generalize respecting it is less;⁴ and, although indeed the apparent limitation of the statement which he half quotes (probably owing to his general love of denudation) from my last letter, to the chain of the Alps, was intended only to attach to the words "quite visibly," yet, had I myself expanded that state-

¹ The battle of Sempach (?). See the letters on *The Italian Question*, at the beginning of the second volume.

² To the effect that "the form of the ground is the result wholly of denudation." For the "scheme," consisting of ten articles, see the note § below.

³ Dr. William Buckland, the geologist, and at one time Dean of Westminster. He died in 1856. See *Fors Clavigera*, 1873, Letter xxxiv. p. 89.

⁴ This and the following sentences allude to parts of the above mentioned scheme. "The whole question," wrote Mr. Jukes, "depends on the relative dates of production of the lithological composition, the petrological structure, and the form of the surface." The scheme then attempts to sketch "the order of the processes which formed these three things," in ten articles, of which the following are specially referred to by Mr. Ruskin: "1. The formation of a great series of stratified rocks on the bed of a sea. . . . 3. The possible intrusion of great masses of granite rock" in more or less fluent state; and 6, 7, 8, 9, which dealt with alternate elevation and depression, of which there might be "even more than one repetition."

ment, I should not have assumed the existence of a sea, to relieve me from the difficulty of accounting for the existence of a lake ; I should not have assumed that all mountain-formations of investiture were marine ; nor claimed the possession of a great series of stratified rocks without inquiring where they were to come from. I should not have thought "even more than one" an adequate expression for the possible number of elevations and depressions which may have taken place since the beginning of time on the mountain-chains of the world ; nor thought myself capable of compressing into Ten Articles, or even into Thirty-nine, my conceptions of the working of the Power which led forth the little hills like lambs, while it rent or established the foundations of the earth ; and set their birth-seal on the forehead of each in the infinitudes of aspect and of function which range between the violet-dyed banks of Thames and Seine, and the vexed Fury-Tower of Cotopaxi.

Not but that large generalizations are, indeed, possible with respect to the diluvial phenomena, among which my antagonist has pursued his—scarcely amphibious?)—investigations. The effects of denudation and deposition are unvarying everywhere, and have been watched with terror and gratitude in all ages. In physical mythology they gave tusk to the Grææ, claw to the Gorgons, bull's frontlet to the floods of Aufidus and Po. They gave weapons to the wars of Titans against Gods, and lifeless seed of life into the hand of Deucalion. Herodotus "rightly spelled" of them, where the lotus rose from the dust of Nile and leaned upon its dew ; Plato rightly dreamed of them in his great vision of the disrobing of the Acropolis to its naked marble ; the keen eye of Horace, half poet's, half farmer's (albeit unaided by theodolite), recognized them alike where the risen brooks of Vallombrosa, amidst the mountain-clamors, tossed their champed shingle to the Etrurian sea, and in the uncoveted wealth of the pastures,

" Quæ Liris quietâ
Mordet aquâ, tactiturnus amnis."¹

¹ See Herodotus, ii. 92 ; Plato, Critias, 112 ; and Horace, Od. i. 31.

But the inner structure of the mountain-chains is as varied as their substance ; and to this day, in some of its mightier developments, so little understood, that my Neptunian opponent himself, in his address delivered at Cambridge in 1862, speaks of an arrangement of strata which it is difficult to traverse ten miles of Alpine limestone without finding an example of, as beyond the limits of theoretical imagination.¹

I feel tempted to say more ; but I have at present little time even for useful, and none for wanton, controversy. Whatever information Mr. Jukes can afford me on these subjects (and I do not doubt he can afford me much), I am ready to receive, not only without need of his entreaty, but with sincere thanks. If he likes to try his powers of sight, "as corrected by the laborious use of the protractor," against mine, I will in humility abide the issue. But at present the question before the house is, as I understand it, simply whether glaciers excavate lake-basins or not. That, in spite of measurement and survey, here or elsewhere, seems to remain a question. May we answer the first, if answerable ? That determined, I think I might furnish some other grounds of debate in this notable cause of Peebles against Plainstones, provided that Mr. Jukes will not in future think his seniority gives him the right to answer me with disparagement instead of instruction, and will bear with the English "student's" weakness which induces me, usually, to wish rather to begin by shooting my elephant than end by describing it out of my moral consciousness.²

J. RUSKIN.

¹ The address was delivered by Mr. Jukes as President of the Geological Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, which met in 1862 at Cambridge. (See the Report of the Association, vol. xxxii. p. 54.)

² Mr. Jukes' letter had concluded by recommending English geologists to pursue their studies at home, on the ground that "a student, commencing to learn comparative anatomy, does not think it necessary to go to Africa and kill an elephant." In the following number of the Reader (Dec. 10) Mr. Jukes wrote, in answer to the present letter, that he had not intended to imply any hostility towards Mr. Ruskin, with whose next letter the discussion ended.

[From "The Reader," December 10, 1864.]

CONCERNING HYDROSTATICS.

NORWICH, 5th December.

YOUR pages are not, I presume, intended for the dissemination of the elements of physical science. Your correspondent "M. A. C." has a good wit, and, by purchasing any common treatise on the barometer, may discover the propriety of exercising it on subjects with which he is acquainted. "G. M." deserves more attention, the confusion in his mind between increase of pressure and increase of density being a very common one.¹ It may be enough to note for him, and for those of your readers whom his letter may have embarrassed, that in any incompressible liquid a body of greater specific gravity than the liquid will sink to any depth, because the column which it forms, together with the vertical column of the liquid above it, always exceeds in total weight the column formed by the equal bulk of the liquid at its side, and the vertical column of liquid above that. Deep-sea soundings would be otherwise impossible. "G. M." may find the explanation of the other phenomena to which he alludes in any elementary work on hydrostatics, and will discover on a little reflection that the statement in my last letter² is simply true. Expanded, it is merely that, when we throw a stone into water, we substitute pressure of stone-surface for pressure of water-surface through-

¹ "M. A. C." wrote "Concerning Stones," and dealt—or attempted to deal—with "atmospheric pressure" in addition to the pressure of water alluded to in Mr. Ruskin's letter of November 26. The letter signed "G. M." was entitled "Mr. Ruskin on Glaciers;" see next note. Both letters appeared in the Reader of December 3, 1864.

² Not in the "last letter," but in the last but one—see *ante*, p. 173, "A stone at the bottom of a stream," etc. The parts of "G. M.'s" letter specially alluded to by Mr. Ruskin are as follows:

"It is very evident that the nearer the source of the glacier, the steeper will be the angle at which it advances from above, and the greater its power of excavation. . . . Mr. Ruskin gets rid of the rocks and *débris* on the under side of the glacier by supposing that they are pressed beyond the range of action in the solid body of the ice; but there must be a limit to this, however soft the matrix."

out the area of horizontal contact of the stone with the ground, and add the excess of the stone's weight over that of an equal bulk of water.

It is, however, very difficult for me to understand how any person so totally ignorant of every circumstance of glacial locality and action, as "G. M." shows himself to be in the paragraph beginning "It is very evident," could have had the courage to write a syllable on the subject. I will waste no time in reply, but will only assure him (with reference to his assertion that I "get rid of the rocks," etc.), that I never desire to get rid of anything but error, and that I should be the last person to desire to get rid of the glacial agency by friction, as I was, I believe, the first to reduce to a diagram the probable stages of its operation on the bases of the higher Alpine aiguilles.¹

Permit me to add, in conclusion, that in future I can take no notice of any letters to which the writers do not think fit to attach their names. There can be no need of initials in scientific discussion, except to shield incompetence or license discourtesy.

J. RUSKIN.

[From "Rendu's Theory of the Glaciers of Savoy," Macmillan, 1874.]

*JAMES DAVID FORBES: HIS REAL GREATNESS.**

THE incidental passage in "Fors," hastily written, on a contemptible issue, does not in the least indicate my sense of the

¹ See *Modern Painters*, Part v., chap. 18, On the Sculpture Mountains, vol. iv. p. 175.

² In connection with the question of glacier-motion, Mr. Ruskin's estimate of Professor Forbes and his work is here reprinted from *Rendu's Glaciers of Savoy* (Macmillan, 1874), pp. 205-207. For a passage on the same subject which was reprinted in the *Glaciers of Savoy*, in addition to the new matter republished here, and for a statement of the course of glacier-science, and the relation of Forbes to Agassiz, the reader is referred to *Fors Clavigera*, 1873, Letter xxxiv. pp. 90-94. The "incidental passage" consists of a review of Professor Tyndall's "Forms of Water" (London, 1872), and the "contemptible issue" was that of his position and Forbes' amongst geological discoverers.

real position of James Forbes among the men of his day. I have asked his son's¹ permission to add a few words expressive of my deeper feelings.

For indeed it seems to me that all these questions as to priority of ideas or observations are beneath debate among noble persons. What a man like Forbes first noticed, or demonstrated, is of no real moment to his memory. What he was, and how he taught, is of consummate moment. The actuality of his personal power, the sincerity and wisdom of his constant teaching, need no applause from the love they justly gained, and can sustain no diminution from hostility ; for their proper honor is in their usefulness. To a man of no essential power, the accident of a discovery is apotheosis ; to *him*, the former knowledge of all the sages of earth is as though it were not ; he calls the ants of his own generation round him, to observe how he flourishes in his tiny forceps the grain of sand he has imposed upon Pelion. But from all such vindication of the claims of Forbes to mere discovery, I, his friend, would, for my own part, proudly abstain. I do not in the slightest degree care whether he was the first to see this, or the first to say that, or how many common persons had seen or said as much before. What I rejoice in knowing of him is that he had clear eyes and open heart for all things and deeds appertaining to his life ; that whatever he discerned, was discerned impartially ; what he said, was said securely ; and that in all functions of thought, experiment, or communication, he was sure to be eventually right, and serviceable to mankind, whether out of the treasury of eternal knowledge he brought forth things new or old.

This is the essential difference between the work of men of true genius and the agitation of temporary and popular power. The first root of their usefulness is in subjection of their vanity to their purpose. It is not in calibre or range of intellect that men vitally differ ; every phase of mental character has honorable office ; but the vital difference between the strong

¹ George Forbes, B.A., Professor of Natural Philosophy in the Andersonian University, Glasgow, and editor of *The Glaciers of Savoy*.

and the weak—or let me say rather, between the availing and valueless intelligence—is in the relation of the love of self to the love of the subject or occupation. Many an Alpine traveller, many a busy man of science, volubly represent to us their pleasure in the Alps; but I scarcely recognize one who would not willingly see them all ground down into gravel, on condition of his being the first to exhibit a pebble of it at the Royal Institution. Whereas it may be felt in any single page of Forbes' writing, or De Saussure's, that they love crag and glacier for their own sake's sake; that they question their secrets in reverent and solemn thirst: not at all that they may communicate them at breakfast to the readers of the *Daily News*—and that, although there were no news, no institutions, no leading articles, no medals, no money, and no mob, in the world, these men would still labor, and be glad, though all their knowledge was to rest with them at last in the silence of the snows, or only to be taught to peasant children sitting in the shade of pines.

And whatever Forbes did or spoke during his noble life was in this manner patiently and permanently true. The passage of his lectures in which he shows the folly of Macaulay's assertion that "The giants of one generation are the pigmies of the next,"¹ beautiful in itself, is more interesting yet in the indication it gives of the general grasp and melodious tone of Forbes' reverent intellect, as opposed to the discordant inso-

¹ This saying of Macaulay's occurred in an address which, as M.P. for that city, he delivered at the opening of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution, in 1846 (Nov. 4). Forbes' criticism of it and of the whole address may be found in a lecture introductory to a course on Natural Philosophy, delivered before the University of Edinburgh (Nov. 1 and 2, 1848), and entitled "The Danger of Superficial knowledge;" under which title it was afterwards printed, together with a newspaper report of Macaulay's address (London and Edinburgh, 1849). In the edition of Macaulay's speeches revised by himself, the sentence in question is omitted, though others of a like nature, such as "The profundity of one age is the shallowness of the next," are retained, and the whole argument of the address remains the same. (See Macaulay's Works, 8 vol. ed., Longmans, 1866. Vol. viii. p. 380, *The Literature of Great Britain*.) For a second mention of this saying by Mr. Ruskin, see also "Remarks

lence of modernism. His mind grew and took color like an Alpine flower, rooted on rock, and perennial in flower ; while Macaulay's swelled like a puff-ball in an unwholesome pasture, and projected itself far round in deleterious dust.

I had intended saying a few words more touching the difference in temper, and probity of heart, between Forbes and Agassiz, as manifested in the documents now¹ laid before the public. And as far as my own feelings are concerned, the death of Agassiz² would not have caused my withholding a word. For in all utterance of blame or praise, I have striven always to be kind to the living—just to the dead. But in deference to the wish of the son of Forbes, I keep silence: I willingly leave sentence to be pronounced by time, above their two graves.

JOHN RUSKIN.

addressed to the Mansfield Art Night Class," 1873, now reprinted in *A Joy for Ever* (Ruskin's Works, vol. ix. p. 201).

The following are parts of the passage (extending over some pages) in Forbes' lecture alluded to by Mr. Ruskin :

"How false, then, as well as arrogant, is the self-gratulation of those, who, forgetful of the struggles and painful efforts by which knowledge is increased, would place themselves, by virtue of their borrowed acquirements, in the same elevated position with their great teachers—nay, who, perceiving the dimness of light and the feebleness of grasp, with which, often at first, great truths have been perceived and held, find food for pride in the superior clearness of their vision and tenacity of their apprehension ! " Then, after quoting some words from Dr. Whewell's *Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences*, vol. ii. p. 525, and after some further remarks, the lecturer thus continued : "The activity of mind, the earnestness, the struggle after truth, the hopeless perplexity breaking up gradually into the fulness of perfect apprehension,—the dread of error, the victory over the imagination in discarding hypotheses, the sense of weakness and humility arising from repeated disappointments, the yearnings after a fuller revelation, and the sure conviction which attends the final advent of knowledge sought amidst difficulties and disappointments,—these are the lessons and the rewards of the discoverers who first put truth within our reach, but of which we who receive it at second-hand can form but a faint and lifeless conception." (See pp. 39–41 of *The Danger of Superficial Knowledge*.)

¹ In the edition of *Rendu's Glaciers of Savoy* already alluded to.

² Forbes died Dec. 31, 1868 ; Agassiz in 1873 ; and De Saussure in 1845.

The following letters,¹ one from Forbes to myself, written ten years ago, and the other from one of his pupils, received by me a few weeks since, must, however, take their due place among the other evidence on which such judgment is to be given.

J. R.

II.—MISCELLANEOUS.

[From "The Artist and Amateur's Magazine" (edited by E. V. Rippinghille), February, 1844, pp. 314-319.]

REFLECTIONS IN WATER.²

To the Editor of "*The Artist and Amateur's Magazine*."

SIR: The phenomena of light and shade, rendered to the eye by the surface or substance of water, are so intricate and so multitudinous, that had I wished fully to investigate, or even fully to state them, a volume instead of a page would have been

¹ The letter from Forbes to Mr. Ruskin (dated December 2, 1864) was presumably elicited by the allusions to Forbes in Mr. Ruskin's letter to the Reader of November 26, 1874 (see *ante*, pp. 171-176). "Advancing years and permanently depressed state of health," ran the letter, "have taken the edge off the bitterness which the injustice I have experienced caused me during many years. But . . . the old fire revives within me when I see any one willing and courageous, like you, to remember an old friend, and to show that you do so." The second letter speaks of the writer's "*boyish enthusiasm*" for Agassiz, an expression to which Mr. Ruskin appends this note: "*The italics are mine*. I think this incidental and naïve proof of the way in which Forbes had spoken of Agassiz to his class, of the greatest value and beautiful interest.—J. R."

² In the first edition of *Modern Painters* (vol. i. p. 330) it was stated that "the horizontal lines cast by clouds upon the sea are not shadows, but reflections;" and that "on clear water near the eye there can never be even the appearance of shadow." This statement being questioned in a letter to the *Art Union Journal* (November, 1843), and that letter being itself criticised in a review of *Modern Painters* in the *Artist and Amateur's Magazine*, p. 262 (December, 1843), there appeared in the last-named periodical two letters upon the subject, of which one was from J. H. Maw, the correspondent of the *Art Union*, and the other—that reprinted here—a reply from "The Author of *Modern Painters*."

required for the task. In the paragraphs¹ which I devoted to the subject I expressed, as briefly as possible, the laws which are of most general application—with which artists are indeed so universally familiar, that I conceived it altogether unnecessary to prove or support them : but since I have expressed them in as few words as possible, I cannot afford to have any of those words missed or disregarded ; and therefore when I say that on *clear* water, *near* the eye, there is no shadow, I must not be understood to mean that on *muddy* water, *far* from the eye there is no shadow. As, however, your correspondent appears to deny my position in toto, and as many persons, on their first glance at the subject, might be inclined to do the same, you will perhaps excuse me for occupying a page or two with a more explicit statement, both of facts and principles, than my limits admitted in the “Modern Painters.”

First, for the experimental proof of my assertion that “on clear water, near the eye, there is no shadow.” Your correspondent’s trial with the tub is somewhat cumbrous and inconvenient ;² a far more simple experiment will settle the matter. Fill a tumbler with water ; throw into it a narrow strip of white paper ; put the tumbler into sunshine ; dip your finger into the water between the paper and the sun, so as to throw a shadow across the paper and on the water. The shadow will of course be distinct on the paper, but on the water absolutely and totally invisible.

¹ The passages in *Modern Painters* referred to in this letter were considerably altered and enlarged in later editions of the work, and the exact words quoted are not to be found in it as finally revised. The reader is, however, referred to vol. i. part ii., § v., chap. i., “Of Water as painted by the Ancients,” in whatever edition of the book he may chance to meet with or possess.

² See the *Artist and Amateur’s Magazine*, p. 313, where the author of the letter, to which this is a reply, adduced in support of his views the following experiment, viz. : to put a tub filled with clear water in the sunlight, and then taking an opaque screen with a hole cut in it, to place the same in such a position as to intercept the light falling upon the tub. Then, he argued, cover the hole over, and the tub will be in shadow ; uncover it again, and a patch of light will fall on the water, proving that water is *not* “insusceptible of light as well as shadow.”

This simple trial of the fact, and your explanation of the principle given in your ninth number,¹ are sufficient proof and explanation of my assertion; and if your correspondent requires authority as well as ocular demonstration, he has only to ask Stanfield or Copley Fielding, or any other good painter of sea; the latter, indeed, was the person who first pointed out the fact to me when a boy. What then, it remains to be determined, are those lights and shades on the sea, which, for the sake of clearness, and because they appear such to the ordinary observer, I have spoken of as "horizontal lines," and which have every appearance of being cast by the clouds like real shadows? I imagined that I had been sufficiently explicit on this subject both at pages 330 and 363;² but your correspondent appears to have confused himself by inaccurately receiving the term *shadow* as if it meant darkness of any kind; whereas my second sentence—"every darkness on water is reflection, not shadow"—might have shown him that I used it in its particular sense, as meaning the absence of *positive* light on a visible surface. Thus, in endeavoring to support his assertion that the shadows on the sea are as distinct as on a grass field, he says that they are so by contrast with the "light reflected from its polished surface;" thus showing at once that he has been speaking and thinking all along, not of shadow, but of the absence of reflected light—an absence which is no more shadow than the absence of the image of a piece of white paper in a mirror is shadow on the mirror.

The question, therefore, is one of terms rather than of things; and before proceeding it will be necessary for me to make your correspondent understand thoroughly what is meant by the term shadow as opposed to that of reflection.

Let us stand on the sea-shore on a cloudless night, with a full moon over the sea, and a swell on the water. Of course a long line of splendor will be seen on the waves under the

¹ In the review of Modern Painters mentioned above.

² Of the first edition of the first volume of Modern Painters. The size of the book (and consequently the paging) was afterwards altered to suit the engravings contained in the last three volumes.

moon, reaching from the horizon to our very feet. But are those waves between the moon and us *actually* more illuminated than any other part of the sea? Not one whit. The whole surface of the sea is under the same full light, but the waves between the moon and us are the only ones which are in a position to reflect that light to our eyes. The sea on both sides of that path of light is in perfect darkness—almost black. But is it so from shadow? Not so, for there is nothing to intercept the moonlight from it: it is so from position, because it cannot reflect any of the rays which fall on it to our eyes, but reflects instead the dark vault of the night sky. Both the darkness and the light on it, therefore—and they are as violently contrasted as may well be—are nothing but reflections, the whole surface of the water being under one blaze of moonlight, entirely unshaded by any intervening object whatsoever.¹

Now, then, we can understand the cause of the *chiaro-scuro* of the sea by daylight with lateral sun. Where the sunlight reaches the water, every ripple, wave, or swell reflects to the eye from some of its planes either the image of the sun or some portion of the neighboring bright sky. Where the cloud interposes between the sun and sea, all these luminous reflections are prevented, and the raised planes of the waves reflect only the dark under-surface of the cloud; and hence, by the multiplication of the images, spaces of light and shade are produced, which lie on the sea precisely in the position of real or positive lights and shadows—corresponding to the outlines of the clouds—laterally cast, and therefore seen in addition to, and at the same time with, the ordinary or direct reflection, vigorously contrasted, the lights being often a blaze of gold, and the shadows a dark leaden gray; and yet, I repeat, they are no more real lights, or real shadows, on the sea, than the image of a black coat is a shadow on a mirror, or the image of white paper a light upon it.

¹ It may be worth noting that the optical delusion above explained is described at some length by Mr. Herbert Spencer (*The Study of Sociology*, p. 191, London, 1874) as one of the commonest instances of popular ignorance.

Are there, then, *no* shadows whatsoever upon the sea? Not so. My assertion is simply that there are none on clear water near the eye. I shall briefly state a few of the circumstances which give rise to real shadow in distant effect.

I. Any admixture of opaque coloring matter, as of mud, chalk, or powdered granite renders water capable of distinct shadow, which is cast on the earthly and solid particles suspended in the liquid. None of the seas on our south-eastern coast are so clear as to be absolutely incapable of shade; and the faint tint, though scarcely perceptible to a near observer,* is sufficiently manifest when seen in large extent from a distance, especially when contrasted, as your correspondent says, with reflected lights. This was one reason for my introducing the words—"near the eye."

There is, however, a peculiarity in the appearances of such shadows which requires especial notice. It is not merely the transparency of water, but its polished surface, and consequent reflective power, which render it incapable of shadow. A perfectly opaque body, if its power of reflection be perfect, receives no shadow (this I shall presently prove); and therefore, in any lustrous body, the incapability of shadow is in proportion to the power of reflection. Now the power of reflection in water varies with the angle of the impinging ray, being of course greatest when that angle is least: and thus, when we look along the water at a low angle, its power of reflection maintains its incapability of shadow to a considerable extent, in spite of its containing suspended opaque matter; whereas, when we look *down* upon water from a height, as we then receive from it only rays which have fallen on it at a large angle, a great number of those rays are unreflected from the surface, but penetrate beneath the surface, and are then reflected † from the suspended opaque matter: thus rendering

* Of course, if water be perfectly foul, like that of the Rhine or Arve, it receives a shadow nearly as well as mud. Yet the succeeding observations on its reflective power are applicable to it, even in this state.

† It must always be remembered that there are two kinds of reflection,—one from polished bodies, giving back rays of light

shadows clearly visible which, at a small angle, would have been altogether unperceived.

II. But it is not merely the presence of opaque matter which renders shadows visible on the sea seen from a height. The eye, when elevated above the water, receives rays reflected from the bottom, of which, when *near* the water, it is insensible. I have seen the bottom at seven fathoms, so that I could count its pebbles, from the cliffs of the Cornish coast; and the broad effect of the light and shade of the bottom is discernible at enormous depths. In fact, it is difficult to say at what depth the rays returned from the bottom become absolutely ineffective—perhaps not until we get fairly out into blue water. Hence, with a white or sandy shore, shadows forcible enough to afford conspicuous variety of color may be seen from a height of two or three hundred feet.

unaltered; the other from unpolished bodies, giving back rays of light altered. By the one reflection we see the images of other objects on the surface of the reflecting object; by the other we are made aware of that surface itself. The difference between these two kinds of reflection has not been well worked by writers on optics; but the great distinction between them is, that the rough body reflects most rays when the angle at which the rays impinge is largest, and the polished body when the angle is smallest. It is the reflection from polished bodies exclusively which I usually indicate by the term; and that from rough bodies I commonly distinguish as “positive light;” but as I have here used the term in its general sense, the explanation of the distinction becomes necessary. All light and shade on matter is caused by reflection of some kind; and the distinction made throughout this paper between reflected and positive light, and between *real* and *pseudo* shadow, is nothing more than the distinction between two kinds of reflection.

I believe some of Bouguer’s¹ experiments have been rendered inaccurate—not in their general result, nor in *ratio* of quantities, but in the quantities themselves—by the difficulty of distinguishing between the two kind of reflected rays.

¹ Pierre Bouguer, author of, amongst other works, the *Traité d’Optique sur la Gradation de la Lumière*. He was born in 1698, and died in 1758.

III. The actual color of the sea itself is an important cause of shadow in distant effect. Of the ultimate causes of local color in water I am not ashamed to confess my total ignorance, for I believe Sir David Brewster himself has not elucidated them. Every river in Switzerland has a different hue. The lake of Geneva, commonly blue, appears, under a fresh breeze, striped with blue and bright red; and the hues of coast-sea are as various as those of a dolphin; but, whatever be the cause of their variety, their intensity is, of course, dependent on the presence of sunlight. The sea under shade is commonly of a cold gray hue; in the sunlight it is susceptible of vivid and exquisite coloring: and thus the forms of clouds are traced on its surface, not by light and shade, but by variation of *color* by grays opposed to greens, blues to rose-tints, etc. All such phenomena are chiefly visible from a height and a distance; and thus furnished me with additional reasons for introducing the words—"near the eye."

IV. Local color is, however, the cause of one beautiful kind of *chiaro-scuro*, visible when we are close to the water—shadows cast, not *on* the waves, but through them, as through misty air. When a wave is raised so as to let the sun-light through a portion of its body, the contrast of the transparent chrysoprased green of the illuminated parts with the darkness of the shadowed is exquisitely beautiful.

Hitherto, however, I have been speaking chiefly of the *transparency* of water as the source of its incapability of shadow. I have still to demonstrate the effect of its polished surface.

Let your correspondent pour an ounce or two of quicksilver into a flat white saucer, and, throwing a strip of white paper into the middle of the mercury, as before into the water, interpose an upright bit of stick between it and the sun: he will then have the pleasure of seeing the shadow of the stick sharply defined on the paper and the edge of the saucer, while on the intermediate portion of mercury it will be totally invisible.* Mercury is a perfectly opaque body, and its incapability

* The mercury must of course be perfectly clean.

of shadow is entirely owing to the perfection of its polished surface. Thus, then, whether water be considered as transparent or reflective (and according to its position it is one or the other, or partially both—for in the exact degree that it *is* the one, it is *not* the other), it is equally incapable of shadow. But as on distant water, so also on near water, when broken, pseudo shadows take place, which are in reality nothing more than the aggregates of reflections. In the illuminated space of the wave, from every plane turned towards the sun there flashes an image of the sun; in the *un*-illuminated space there is seen on every such plane only the dark image of the interposed body. Every wreath of the foam, every jet of the spray, reflects in the sunlight a thousand diminished suns, and refracts their rays into a thousand colors; while in the shadowed parts the same broken parts of the wave appear only in dead, cold white; and thus pseudo shadows are caused, occupying the position of real shadows, defined in portions of their edge with equal sharpness: and yet, I repeat, they are no more real shadows than the image of a piece of black cloth is a shadow on a mirror.

But your correspondent will say, "What does it matter to me, or to the artist, whether they *are* shadows or not? They are darkness, and they supply the place of shadows, and that it is all I contend for." Not so. They do *not* supply the place of shadows; they are divided from them by this broad distinction, that while shadow causes uniform deepening of the ground-tint in the objects which it affects, these pseudo shadows are merely portions of that ground-tint itself undeepened, but cut out and rendered conspicuous by flashes of light irregularly disposed around it. The ground-tint both of shadowed and illumined parts is precisely the same—a pure pale gray, catching as it moves the hues of the sky and clouds; but on this, in the illumined spaces, there fall touches and flashes of intense reflected light, which are absent in the shadow. If, for the sake of illustration, we consider the wave as hung with a certain quantity of lamps, irregularly disposed, the shape and extent of a shadow on that wave will be marked by the lamps being all put out within its in-

fluence, while the tint of the water itself is entirely unaffected by it.

The works of Stanfield will supply your correspondent with perfect and admirable illustrations of this principle. His water-tint is equally clear and luminous whether in sunshine or shade ; but the whole lustre of the illumined parts is attained by bright isolated touches of reflected light.

The works of Turner will supply us with still more striking examples, especially in cases where slanting sunbeams are cast from a low sun along breakers, when the shadows will be found in a state of perpetual transition, now defined for an instant on a mass of foam, then lost in an interval of smooth water, then coming through the body of a transparent wave, then passing off into the air upon the dust of the spray—supplying, as they do in nature, exhaustless combinations of ethereal beauty. From Turner's habit of choosing for his subjects sea much broken with foam, the shadows in his works are more conspicuous than in Stanfield's, and may be studied to greater advantage. To the works of these great painters, those of Vanderveelde may be opposed for instances of the impossible. The black shadows of this latter painter's near waves supply us with innumerable and most illustrative examples of everything which sea shadows are *not*.

Finally, let me recommend your correspondent, if he wishes to obtain perfect knowledge of the effects of shadow on water, whether calm or agitated, to go through a systematic examination of the works of Turner. He will find *every* phenomenon of this kind noted in them with the most exquisite fidelity. The Alnwick Castle, with the shadow of the bridge cast on the dull surface of the moat, and mixing with the reflection, is the most finished piece of water-painting with which I am acquainted. Some of the recent Venices have afforded exquisite instances of the change of color in water caused by shadow, the illumined water being transparent and green, while in the shade it loses its own color, and takes the blue of the sky.

But I have already, Sir, occupied far too many of your valuable pages, and I must close the subject, although hundreds

of points occur to me which I have not yet illustrated.* The discussion respecting the Grotto of Capri is somewhat irrelevant, and I will not enter upon it, as thousands of laws respecting light and color are there brought into play, in addition to the water's incapability of shadow.¹ But it is somewhat singular that the Newtonian principle, which your correspondent enunciates in conclusion, is the *very cause* of the incapability of shadow which he disputes. I am not, however, writing a treatise on optics, and therefore can at present do no more than simply explain what the Newtonian law actually signifies, since, by your correspondent's enunciation of it, "pellucid substances reflect light only from their surfaces," an inexperienced reader might be led to conclude that *opaque* bodies reflected light from something else than their surfaces.

The law is, that whatever number of rays escape reflection at the surface of the water, pass through its body without further reflection, being therein weakened, but not reflected; but that, where they pass out of the water again, as, for instance, if there be air-bubbles at the bottom, giving an under-surface to the water, there a number of rays are reflected from that under-surface, and do not pass out of the water, but return to the eye; thus causing the bright luminosity of the under bubbles. Thus water reflects from both its surfaces—it reflects it when passing out as well as when entering; but it reflects none whatever from its own interior mass. If it did, it would be capable of shadow.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR OF "MODERN PAINTERS."

* Among other points, I have not explained why water, though it has no shadow, has a dark side. The cause of this is the Newtonian law noticed below, that water weakens the rays passing through its mass, though it reflects none; and, also, that it reflects rays from both surfaces.

¹ The review of *Modern Painters* had mentioned the Grotto of Capri, near Naples, as "a very beautiful illustration of the great quantity of light admitted or contained in water," and on this Mr. J. H. Maw had commented.

[From "The London Review," May 16, 1861.]

THE REFLECTION OF RAINBOWS IN WATER.¹*To the Editor of "The London Review."*

SIR: I do not think there is much difficulty in the rainbow business. We cannot see the reflection of the same rainbow

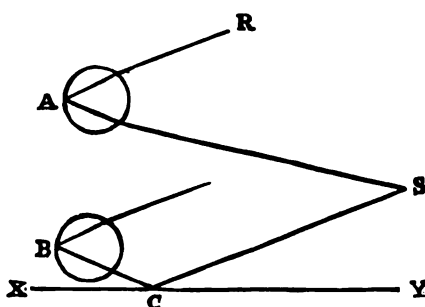


FIG. 1.

which we behold in the sky, but we see the reflection of another invisible one within it. Suppose a and b, Fig. 1, are two falling raindrops, and the spectator is at s, and x y is the water surface. If R a s be

a sun ray giving, we will say, the red ray in the visible rainbow, the ray, B c s, will give the same red ray, reflected from the water at c.

It is rather a long business to examine the lateral angles, and I have not time to do it; but I presume the result would be, that if a m b, Fig. 2, be the visible rainbow, and x y the water horizon, the reflection will be the dotted line c e d, reflecting, that is to say, the invisible bow, c n d; thus, the terminations of the arcs of the visible and reflected bows do not coincide.

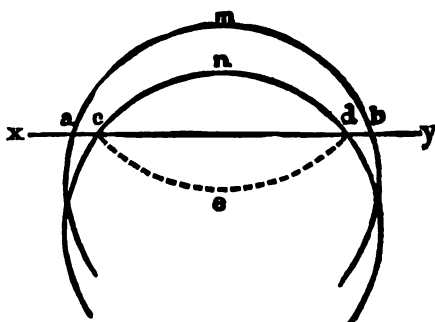


FIG. 2.

The interval, m n, depends on the position of the spectator with respect to the water surface. The thing can hardly ever

¹ The London Review of May 4 contained a critique of the Exhibition of the Society of Water-colors, which included a notice of Mr. Duncan's

be seen in nature, for if there be rain enough to carry the bow to the water surface, that surface will be ruffled by the drops, and incapable of reflection.

Whenever I have seen a rainbow over water (sea, mostly), it has stood on it reflectionless; but interrupted conditions of rain might be imagined which would present reflection on near surfaces.

Always very truly yours,

J. RUSKIN.

7th May, 1861.

[From "The Proceedings of the Ashmolean Society," May 10, 1841.]

A LANDSLIP NEAR GIAGNANO.

"THE Secretary read a letter ¹ from J. Ruskin, Esq., of Christ Church, dated Naples, February 7, 1841, and addressed to Dr. Buckland,² giving a description of a recent landslip near that place, which had occasioned a great loss of life: it occurred at the village of Giagnano, near Castel-a-mare, on the 22d of January last. The village is situated on the slope of a conical hill of limestone, not less than 1400 feet in height, and composed of thin beds similar to those which form the greater part of the range of Sorrento. The hill in question is nearly isolated, though forming part of the range, the slope of its sides uniform, and inclined at not less than 40°. Assisted by projecting ledges of the beds of rock, a soil has accumulated on this slope three or four feet in depth, rendering it quite smooth and uniform. The higher parts are covered in many places with brushwood, the lower with vines trellised over old mulberry trees. There are slight evidences of recent aqueous action on the sides of the hill, a few gullies descending towards the east side of the village. After two days of heavy

"Shiplake, on the Thames" (No. 52). In this picture the artist had painted a rainbow reflected in the water, the truth of which to nature was questioned by some of his critics. Mr. Ruskin's was not the only letter in support of the picture's truth.

¹ The present letter is the earliest in date of any in these volumes.

² See note to p. 178.

rain, on the evening of January 22, a torrent of water burst down on the village to the west of these gullies, and the soil accumulated on the side of the hill gave way in a wedge-shaped mass, the highest point being about 600 feet above the houses, and slid down, leaving the rocks perfectly bare. It buried the nearest group of cottages, and remained heaped up in longitudinal layers above them, whilst the water ran in torrents over the edge towards the plain, sweeping away many more houses in its course. To the westward of this point another slip took place of smaller dimensions than the first, but coming on a more crowded part of the village, overwhelmed it completely, occasioning the loss of 116 lives."

[From "The Athenæum," February 14, 1867.]

THE GENTIAN.¹

DENMARK HILL, Feb. 10.

If your correspondent "Y. L. Y." will take a little trouble in inquiring into the history of the gentian, he will find that, as is the case with most other flowers, there are many species of it. He knows the dark blue gentian (*Gentiana acaulis*) because it grows, under proper cultivation, as healthily in England as on the Alps. And he has *not* seen the pale blue gentian (*Gentiana verna*) shaped like a star, and of the color of the sky, because that flower grows unwillingly, if at all, except on its native rocks. I consider it, therefore, as specially characteristic of Alpine scenery, while its beauty, to my mind, far exceeds that of the darker species.

I have, etc.,

J. RUSKIN.

¹ In the Notes on the Turner Gallery at Marlborough House, 1856 (p. 23), Mr. Ruskin speaks of the "pale ineffable azure" of the gentian. The present letter was written in reply to one signed "Y. L. Y." in the Athenæum of February 7, 1857 in which this expression was criticised. In a subsequent issue of the same journal (February 21) Mr. Ruskin's querist denied the ignorance imputed to him, and still questioned the propriety of calling the gentian "pale," without at the same time distinguishing the two species.

[Date and place of original publication unknown.]

ON THE STUDY OF NATURAL HISTORY.

To Adam White, of Edinburgh.

It would be pleasing alike to my personal vanity and to the instinct of making myself serviceable, which I will fearlessly say is as strong in me as vanity, if I could think that any letter of mine would be helpful to you in the recommendation of the study of natural history, as one of the best elements of early as of late education. I believe there is no child so dull or so indolent but it may be roused to wholesome exertion by putting some practical and personal work on natural history within its range of daily occupation; and, once aroused, few pleasures are so innocent, and none so constant. I have often been unable, through sickness or anxiety, to follow my own art work, but I have never found natural history fail me, either as a delight or a medicine. But for children it must be curtly and wisely taught. We must *show* them things, not tell them names. A deal chest of drawers is worth many books to them, and a well-guided country walk worth a hundred lectures.

I heartily wish you, not only for your sake, but for that of the young thistle buds of Edinburgh, success in promulgating your views and putting them in practice.

Always believe me faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

NOTE TO THE SECOND VOLUME.

The letters relating to Mr. Ruskin's Candidature for the Lord Rectorship of Glasgow University were published when this volume was almost out of the printers' hands. They have however been included, by Mr. Ruskin's wish, and will be found at the end of this volume, where a letter to the late Mr. W. H. Harrison, which has just been brought to my notice, and two very recent letters on Dramatic Reform, have, at the cost of some delay, been also added.—[ED.]

November 15, 1880.

NOTE.—In the second and third columns the bracketed words and figures are more or

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less certainly conjectured; whilst those unbracketed give the actual dating of the letters.

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ARROWS OF THE CHACE.

LETTERS ON POLITICS AND WAR.

[From "The Scotaman," July 20, 1859.]

THE ITALIAN QUESTION.¹

BERLIN, *June 6, 1859.*

I HAVE been thinking of sending a few lines about what I have seen of Austrians and Italians ; but every time I took my pen and turned from my own work about clouds and leafage to think for a few minutes concerning political clouds and thickets, I sank into a state of amazement which reduced me to helpless silence. I will try and send you an incoherent line to-day ; for the smallest endeavor at coherence will bring me into that atmosphere of astonishment again, in which I find no expression.

You northern Protestant people are always overrating the value of Protestantism as such. Your poetical clergymen make sentimental tours in the Vaudois country, as if there were no worthy people in the Alps but the Vaudois. Did the enlightened Edinburgh evangelicals never take any interest in the freedom of the Swiss, nor hear of such people as Winkel-

¹This and the two following letters deal, it will be seen, with "the Italian question" in 1859, when the peace of Europe was disturbed by the combined action of France and Sardinia against Austria in the cause of Italian independence. Of these three letters the first was written two days after the defeat of the Austrians at Magenta, followed by the entrance into Milan of the French, and the second a few days before the similar victory of the French and Sardinian armies at Solferino.

ried or Tell? Not but that there is some chance of Tell disappearing one of these days under acutest historical investigation. Still he, or somebody else, verily got Switzerland rid of much evil, and made it capable of much good; and if you examine the influence of the battles of Morgarten and Sempach on European history, you will find they were good and true pieces of God's work.¹ Do people suppose they were done by Protestants? Switzerland owes all that she is—all that she is ever likely to be—to her stout and stern Roman Catholics, faithful to their faith to this day—they, and the Tyrolese, about the truest Roman Catholics in Christendom and certainly among its worthiest people, though they laid your Zuingli and a good deal of ranting Protestantism which Zuingli in vain tried to make either rational or charitable, dead together on the green meadows of Cappel, and though the Tyrolese marksmen at this moment are following up their rifle practice to good purpose, and with good will, with your Vaudois hearts for targets.

The amazement atmosphere keeps floating with its edges about me, though I write on as fast as I can in hopes of keeping out of it. You Scotch, and we English!! to keep up the miserable hypocrisy of calling ourselves Protestants! And here have been two of the most powerful protests (sealed with quite as much blood as is usually needed for such documents)

¹ Few readers need be reminded of the position of Tell in the list of Swiss patriots (*pace* the "acutest historical investigation," which puts him in the list of mythical personages) in the early part of the fourteenth century; of Arnold von Winkelried who met the heroic death, by which he secured his country's freedom, at Sempach in 1386; or of Ulrich Zuingli, the Swiss Protestant leader of his time, who fell at Cappel, in the war of the Reformed against the Romish Cantons, in 1531. At the battle of Morgarten, in 1315, twenty thousand Austrians were defeated by no more than thirteen hundred Swiss, with such valor that the name of the victors' canton was thereupon extended to the whole country, thenceforth called Switzerland.

It may be further noted that Arnold of Sempach is, with Leonidas, Curtius, and Sir Richard Grenville, named amongst the types of "the divinest of sacrifices, that of the patriot for his country" in Mr. Ruskin's Preface, *Bibliotheca Pastorum*, vol. i. p. xxxlii.

that ever were made against the Papacy—one in 1848,¹ and one now—twenty thousand men or thereabouts lying, at this time being, in the form of torn flesh and shattered bones, among the rice marshes of the Novarese, and not one jot of our precious Protestant blood gone to the signature. Not so much as one noble flush of it, that I can see, on our clay cheeks, besmirched, as they are, with sweat and smoke; but all for gold, and out of chimneys. Of sweat for bread that perishes not, or of the old Sinai smoke for honor of God's law, and revelation thereof—no drop nor shadow. Not so much as a coroner's inquest on those dead bodies in the rice fields—dead men who must have been murdered by somebody. If a drunken man falls in a ditch, you will have your Dogberry and Verges talk over him by way of doing justice; but your twenty thousand—not drunken, but honest, respectable, well-meaning, and serviceable men—are made rice manure of, and you think it is all right. We Protestants indeed! The Italians are Protestants, and in a measure the French—nay, even the Austrians (at all events those conical-hatted mountaineers), according to their understanding of the matter. What we are, Moloch or Mammon, or the Protestant devil made up of both, perhaps knows.

Do not think I dislike the Austrians. I have great respect and affection for them, and I have seen more of them in familiar intercourse than most Englishmen. One of my best friends in Venice in the winter of 1849–50 was the Artillery officer who had directed the fire on the side of Mestre in 1848. I have never known a nobler person. Brave, kind, and gay—as gentle as a lamb, as playful as a kitten—knightly in courtesy and in all tones of thought—ready at any instant to lay down his life for his country or his Emperor. He was by no means a rare instance either of gentleness or of virtue among the men whom the Liberal portion of our English press represent as only tyrants and barbarians. Radetzky himself was

¹ The year of the Lombard insurrection, when Radetzky, the Austrian field-marshal, defeated the insurgents at Custoza near Verona. Radetzky died in 1858.

one of the kindest of men—his habitual expression was one of overflowing *bonhomie*, or of fatherly regard for the welfare of all around him. All who knew him loved him. In little things his kindness was almost ludicrous. I saw him at Verona run out of his own supper-room and return with a plate of soup in his hand, the waiters (his youngest aides de-camp) not serving his lady guests fast enough to please him ; yet they were nimble enough, as I knew in a race with two of them among the fire-flies by the Mincio, only the evening before. For a long time I regarded the Austrians as the only protection of Italy from utter dissolution (such as that which, I see to-day, it is reported that the Tuscan army has fallen into, left for five weeks to itself), and I should have looked upon them as such still, if the Sardinian Government had not shown itself fit to take their place. And the moment that any Italian Government was able to take their place, the Austrians necessarily become an obstacle to Italian progress, for all their virtues are incomprehensible to the Italians, and useless to them. Unselfish individually, the Austrians are nationally entirely selfish, and in this consists, so far as it is truly alleged against them, their barbarism. These men of whom I have been speaking would have given, any of them, life and fortune unhesitatingly at their Emperor's bidding, but their magnanimity was precisely that of the Highlander or the Indian, incognizant of any principle of action but that of devotion to his chief or nation. All abstract grounds of conscience, all universal and human hopes, were inconceivable by them. Such men are at present capable of no feeling towards Italy but scorn ; their power was like a bituminous cerecloth wrapping her corpse—it saved her from the rottenness of revolution ; but it must be unwound, if the time has come for her resurrection.

I do not know if that time has come, or can come. Italy's true oppression is all her own. Spain is oppressed by the Spaniard, not by the Austrian. Greece needs but to be saved from the Greeks. No French Emperor, however mighty his arm or sound his faith, can give Italy freedom.

"A gift of that which is not to be given
By all the associate powers of earth and heaven."

But the time is come at least to bid her be free, if she has the power of freedom. It is not England, certainly, who should forbid her. I believe that is what it will come to, however—not so much because we are afraid of Napoleon, as because we are jealous of him. But of him and us I have something more to say than there is time for to-night. These good, stupid, affectionate, faithful Germans, too (grand fellows under arms; I never imagined so magnificent a soldiery as 15,000 of them which I made a shift to see, through sand clouds, march past the Prince Frederick William¹ on Saturday morning last). But to hear them fretting and foaming at the French getting into Milan!—they having absolutely no other idea on all this complicated business than that French are fighting Germans! Wrong or right, why or wherefore, matters not a jot to them. French are fighting Germans—somehow, somewhere, for some reason—and beer and Vaterland are in peril, and the English in fault, as we are assuredly, but not on that side, for I believe it to be quite true which a French friend, high in position, says in a letter this morning—"If the English had not sympathized with the Austrians there would have been no war." By way of keeping up the character of incoherence to which I have vowed myself, I may tell you that before that French letter came, I received another from a very sagacious Scotch friend (belonging, as I suppose most Scotch people do, to the class of persons who call themselves "religious"), containing this marvellous enunciation of moral principle, to be acted upon in difficult circumstances, "Mind your own business." It is a serviceable principle enough for men of the world, but a surprising one in the mouth of a person who professes to be a Bible obeyer. For, as far as I remember the tone of that obsolete book, "our own" is precisely the last business which

¹ The Prince Frederick William, now Emperor of Germany (having succeeded his brother Frederick William IV. in January, 1861), was at the date of this letter Regent of Prussia, and Commander-in-Chief of the Prussian forces.

it ever tells us to mind. It tells us often to mind God's business, often to mind other people's business; our own, in any eager or earnest way, not at all. "What thy hand findeth to do." Yes; but in God's fields, not ours. One can imagine the wiser fishermen of the Galilean lake objecting to Peter and Andrew that they were not minding their business, much more the commercial friends of Levi speaking with gentle pity of him about the receipt of Custom. "A bad man of business always—see what has come of it—quite mad at last."

And my astonishing friend went on to say that this was to be our principle of action "where the path was not quite clear"—as if any path ever *was* clear till you got to the end of it, or saw it a long way off; as if all human possibility of path was not among clouds and brambles—often cold, always thorny—misty with roses occasionally, or dim with dew, often also with shadow of Death—misty, more particularly in England just now, with shadow of that commercially and otherwise valuable smoke before spoken of.

However, if the path is not to be seen, it may be felt, or at least tumbled off, without any particular difficulty. This latter course of proceeding is our probablest, of course.—But I can't write any more to-night.

I am, etc.,

J. RUSKIN.

Note to p. 213.—The lines quoted are from Wordsworth's "Poems dedicated to National Independence and Liberty," Part II., Sonnet i. The second line should read, "By all the blended powers of earth and heaven."

[From "The Scotsman," July 23, 1859.]

THE ITALIAN QUESTION.

BERLIN, *June* 15.

You would have had this second letter sooner, had I not lost myself, after despatching the first, in farther consideration of the theory of Non-Intervention, or minding one's own business. What, in logical terms, is the theory? If one sees a costermonger wringing his donkey's tail, is it proper to "inter-

vene"? and if one sees an Emperor or a System wringing a nation's neck, is it improper to intervene? Or is the Intervention allowable only in the case of hides, not of souls? for even so, I think you might find among modern Italians many quite as deserving of intervention as a donkey. Or is interference allowable when one person does one wrong to another person, but when two persons do two wrongs to two, or three to three, or a multitude to a multitude; and is there any algebraic work on these square and cube roots of morality wherein I may find how many coadjutors or commissions any given crooked requires to make it straight? Or is it a geographical question; and may one advisably interfere at Berwick but not at Haddington? Or is there any graduated scale of intervention, practicable according to the longitude? I see my way less clearly, because the illustrations of the theory of Non-Intervention are as obscure as its statement. The French are at present happy and prosperous; content with their ruler and themselves; their trade increasing, and their science and art advancing; their feelings towards other nations becoming every day more just. Under which circumstances we English non-interventionists consider it our duty to use every means in our power of making the ruler suspected by the nation, and the nation unmanageable by the ruler. We call both all manner of names: exhaust every term of impertinence and every method of disturbance; and do our best, in indirect and underhand ways, to bring about revolution, assassination, or any other close of the existing system likely to be satisfactory to Royals' in general. This is your non-intervention when a nation is prosperous.

On the other hand the Italian nation is unhappy and unprosperous; its trade annihilated, its arts and sciences retrograde, its nerve and moral sense prostrated together; it is capable only of calling to you for help, and you will not help it. The man you have been calling names, with his unruly colonels, undertakes to help it, and Christian England, with secret hope that, in order to satisfy her spite against the un-

¹ A misprint for "Rogues." See next letter, p. 219.

ruly colonels, the French army may be beaten, and the Papacy fully established over the whole of Italy—Christian England, I say, with this spiteful jealousy for one of her motives, and a dim, stupid, short-sighted, sluggish horror of interruption of business for the other, takes, declaratively and ostensibly, this highly Christian position. “Let who will prosper or perish, die or live—let what will be declared or believed—let whatsoever iniquity be done, whatsoever tyranny be triumphant, how many soever of faithful or fiery soldiery be laid in new embankments of dead bodies along those old embankments of Mincio and Brenta ; yet will we English, drive our looms, cast up our accounts, and bet on the Derby, in peace and gladness ; our business is only therewith ; for us there is no book of fate, only ledgers and betting-books ; for us there is no call to meddle in far-away business. See ye to it. We wash our hands of it in that sea-foam of ours ; surely the English Channel is better than Abana and Pharpar, or than the silver basin which Pilate made use of, and our soap is of the best almond-cake.”

I hear the Derby was great this year.¹ I wonder, sometimes, whether anybody has ever calculated, in England, how much taxation the nation pays annually for the maintenance of that great national institution. Observe—what I say of the spirit in which the English bear themselves at present, is founded on what I myself have seen and heard, not on what I read in journals. I read them little at home—here I hardly see them. I have no doubt that in the Liberal papers one might find much mouthing about liberty, as in the Conservative much about order, it being neither liberty nor order which is wanted, but Justice. You may have Freedom of all Abomination, and Order of all Iniquity—if you look for Forms instead of Facts. Look for the facts first—the doing of justice howsoever and by whatsoever forms or informalities. And the forms will come—shapely enough, and sightly enough,

¹ “Magnificent weather and excellent sport made the great people’s meeting pass off with great *éclat*.” (Annual Register for 1859, p. 73.) The race was won by Sir J. Hawley’s Musjid.

afterwards. Yet, perhaps, not till long afterwards. Earnest as I am for the freedom of Italy, no one can hope less from it, for many a year to come. Even those Vaudois, whom you Presbyterians admire so much, have made as yet no great show of fruit out of their religious freedom. I went up from Turin to Torre di Lucerna to look at them last year. I have seldom slept in a dirtier inn, seldom seen peasants' cottages so ill built, and never yet in my life saw anywhere paths so full of nettles. The faces of the people are interesting, and their voices sweet, except in howlings on Sunday evening, which they performed to a very disquieting extent in the street till about half-past ten, waking me afterwards between twelve and one with another "catch," and a dance through the village of the liveliest character. Protestantism is apt sometimes to take a gayer character abroad than with us. Geneva has an especially disreputable look on Sunday evenings, and at Hanover I see the shops are as wide open on Sunday as Saturday; here, however, in Berlin, they shut up as close as you do at Edinburgh. I think the thing that annoyed me most at La Tour, however, was the intense sectarianism of the Protestant dogs. I can make friends generally, fast enough, with any canine or feline creature; but I could make nothing of those evangelical brutes, and there was as much snarling and yelping that afternoon before I got past the farmhouses to the open hill-side, as in any of your Free Church discussions. It contrasted very painfully with the behavior of such Roman Catholic dogs as I happen to know—St. Bernard's and others—who make it their business to entertain strangers. But the hill-side was worth reaching—for though that Lucerna valley is one of the least interesting I ever saw in the Alps, there is a craggy ridge on the north of it which commands a notable view. In about an hour and a half's walking you may get up to the top of a green, saddle-shaped hill, which separates the Lucerna valley from that of Angrogna; if then, turning to the left (westward), you take the steepest way you can find up the hill, another couple of hours will bring you to a cone of stones which the shepherds have built on the ridge, and there you may see all the historical sites of the valley of Angrogna.

as in a map—and as much of Monte Viso and Piedmont as clouds will let you. I wish I could draw you a map of Piedmont as I saw it that afternoon. The air was half full of white cumulus clouds, lying nearly level about fifteen hundred feet under the ridge; and through every gap of them a piece of Piedmont with a city or two. Turin, twenty-eight miles away as the bird flies, shows through one cloud-opening like a handful of golden sand in a pool of blue sea.

I've no time to write any more to-day, for I've been to Charlottenburg, out of love for Queen Louise.¹ I can't see a good painting of her anywhere, and they show her tomb by blue light, like the nun scene in *Robert le Diable*. A German woman's face, if beautiful at all, is exquisitely beautiful; but it depends mainly on the thoughtfulness of the eyes, and the bright hair. It rarely depends much upon the nose, which has perhaps a tendency to be—if anything—a little too broadish and flattish—perhaps one might even say in some cases, knobbish. (The Hartz mountains, I see, looking at them from Brunswick, have similar tendencies, less excusably and more decidedly.) So when the eyes are closed—and for the soft hair one has only furrowed marble—and the nose to its natural disadvantages adds that of being seen under blue light, the general effect is disappointing.

Frederick the Great's celebrated statue is at the least ten yards too high² from the ground to be of any use; one sees

¹ The mother of the present Emperor, whose treatment by Napoleon I., and whose own admirable qualities, have won for her the tender and affectionate memory of her people. She died in 1810. Her tomb at Charlottenburg is the work of the German sculptor, Christian Rauch.

² The full height of this statue (also the work of Rauch) is, inclusive of the pedestal, somewhat over forty-two feet from the ground. One of the bas-relief tablets which flank the pedestal represents the Apotheosis of the monarch. The visitor to Berlin may recall August Kiss's bronze group, representing the combat of an Amazon with a tiger, on the right side of the Old Museum steps; and Holbein's portrait of George Gyzen, a merchant of London, is No. 586 in the picture galleries of the Museum. It is described by Mr. Ruskin in his article on Sir Joshua and Holbein in the *Cornhill Magazine* of March, 1860, and also in *Wornum's Life and Works of Holbein*. p. 260 (London, 1867).

nothing but the edges of the cloak he never wore, the soles of his boots, and, in a redundant manner, his horse's tail. Under which vertically is his Apotheosis. In which process he sits upon the back of an eagle, and waves a palm, with appearance of satisfaction to himself, and it is to be hoped no danger of any damage to three stars in the neighborhood.

Kiss's Amazon makes a good grotesque for the side of the Museum steps; it was seen to disadvantage in London. The interior of the gallery is very beautiful in many ways; and Holbein's portrait of George Gyzen is worth coming all the way from England to see only ten minutes. I never saw so noble a piece of work of its kind in my life.

Believe me, etc.,

J. RUSKIN.

[From "The Scotsman," August 6, 1859.]

THE ITALIAN QUESTION.

SCHAFFHAUSEN, August 1, 1859.

Letter to the Editor (of "The Scotsman").

SIR: I have just received the number of the *Scotsman* containing my second letter from Berlin, in which there is rather an awkward misprint of "royals" for "rogues," which must have puzzled some of your readers, no less than the general tone of the letter, written as it was for publication at another time, and as one of a series begun in another journal. I am obliged by the admission of the letter into your columns; and I should have been glad to continue in those columns the series I intended, had not the refusal of this letter by the *Witness*¹ shown me the liability to misapprehen-

¹ After a careful and repeated search in the columns of the *Witness*, I am still unable to certainly explain these allusions. It seems, however, that the two preceding letters had been sent to the *Witness*, which printed the first and refused to print the second. The *Scotsman* printed both under the titles of Mr. Ruskin on the Italian Question, and Mr. Ruskin on Foreign Politics, whilst it distinguished this third letter by the additional heading of Letter to the Editor. It may be conjectured,

sion under which I should be writing. I had thought that, seeing for these twenty years I have been more or less conversant with Italy and the Italians, a few familiar letters written to a personal friend, at such times as I could win from my own work, might not have been uninteresting to Scottish readers, even though my opinions might occasionally differ sharply from theirs, or be expressed in such rough way as strong opinions must be, when one has no time to polish them into more pleasing presentability. The refusal of the letter by the *Witness* showed me that this was not so; and as I have no leisure to take up the subject methodically, I must leave what I have written in its present imperfect form. It is indeed not mainly a question of time, which I would spend gladly, though to handle the subject of the present state of Italy with any completeness would involve a total abandonment of other work for some weeks. But I feel too deeply in this matter to allow myself to think of it continuously. To me, the state of the modern political mind, which hangs the slaughter of twenty thousand men, and the destinies of twenty myriads of human souls, on the trick that transforms a Ministry, or the chances of an enlarged or diminished interest in trade, is something so horrible that I find no utterance wherewith to characterize it—nor any courage wherewith to face the continued thought of it, unless I had clear expectation of doing good by the effort—expectation which the mere existence of the fact forbids. I leave therefore the words I have written to such work as they may; hoping, indeed, nothing from any words; thankful if a few people here and there understand and sympathize in the feelings with which they were written; and thankful, if none so sympathize, that I am able

therefore, that the first two letters were reprinted by the Scotsman from another paper, and that, in receiving the number of the Scotsman containing the second, Mr. Ruskin did not know that it had reprinted the first also. As to the "series begun in another journal," it is, I think, clear that it had not been long continued, as the letter dated "June 15," sent to and refused by it, is spoken of as the "second letter," so that that dated "June 6" must have been the first, as this was unquestionably the last of the series.

at least to claim some share in the sadness, though not in the triumph, of the words of Farinata—

“ Fu’ io sol colà, dove sofferto
Fu per ciascun di torre via Fiorenza,
Colui che la difese a viso aperto.”¹

I am, etc., J. RUSKIN.

[From “The Liverpool Albion,” November 2, 1863.]

*THE FOREIGN POLICY OF ENGLAND.*²

ZURICH, Oct. 25th, 1863.

SIR: I beg to acknowledge your favor of the 20th of October. My health does not now admit of my taking part frequently in public business; yet I should have held it a duty to accept the invitation of the directors of the Liverpool Institute, but that, for the time being, my temper is at fault, as well as my health; and I am wholly unable to go on with any of my proper work, owing to the horror and shame with which I regard the political position taken, or rather sunk into, by England in her foreign relations—especially in the affairs of

¹ “But singly there I stood, when, by consent
Of all, Florence had to the ground been razed,
The one who openly forbade the deed.”

CARY’S DANTE—“L’Inferno,” x. ll. 90-93.

Farinata degli Uberti was a noble Florentine, and the leader of the Ghibelline faction, when they obtained a signal victory over the Guelfi at Montaperto, near the river Arbia. Machiavelli calls him “a man of exalted soul, and great military talents” (Hist. of Florence, Bk. ii.). Subsequently, when it was proposed that, in order to maintain the ascendancy of the Ghibelline faction in Tuscany, Florence should be destroyed, Farinata alone of all the Council opposed the measure, declaring that he had endured every hardship with no other view than that of being able to pass his days in his own country. (See Cary’s notes to Canto x.)

² This letter was written in answer to a request that Mr. Ruskin would come and preside at the distribution of prizes among the students in the Science and Art Department of the Liverpool Institute, on Saturday, Oct. 31, 1863. It was subsequently read on the occasion of distribution, in accordance with the wish expressed towards the end of the letter.

Italy and Poland.¹ What these matters have to do with Art may not at first be clear, but I can perhaps make it so by a short similitude. Suppose I had been engaged by an English gentleman to give lectures on Art to his son. Matters at first go smoothly, and I am diligent in my definitions of line and color, until, on Sunday morning, at breakfast time, a ticket-of-leave man takes a fancy to murder a girl in the road leading round the lawn, before the house-windows. My patron, hearing the screams, puts down his paper, adjusts his spectacles, slowly apprehends what is going on, and rings the bell for his smallest footman. "John, take my card and compliments to that gentleman outside the hedge, and tell him that his proceedings are abnormal, and, I may add, to me personally—offensive. Had that road passed through my property, I should have felt it my duty to interfere." John takes the card, and returns with it; the ticket-of-leave man finishes his work at his leisure; but, the screams ceasing as he fills the girl's mouth with clay, the English gentleman returns to his muffins, and congratulates himself on having "kept out of that mess." Presently afterwards he sends for me to know if I shall be ready to lecture on Monday. I am somewhat nervous, and answer—I fear rudely—"Sir, your son is a good lad; I hope he will grow to be a man—but, for the present, I cannot teach him anything. I should like, indeed, to teach *you* something, but have no words for the lesson." Which indeed I have not. If I say any words on such matters, people ask me, "Would I have the country go to war? do I know how dreadful a thing war is?" Yes, truly, I know it. I like war as ill as most people—so ill, that I would not spend twenty millions a year in making machines for it, neither my holidays and pocket money in playing at it; yet I would have the country go to war, with haste, in a good quarrel; and, which is perhaps eccentric in me, rather in another's quarrel than in her own. We say of ourselves complacently that we will

¹ See the preceding and the following letter. This one was, it will be seen, written in the year of the last great struggle of Poland against Russia.

not go to war for an idea ; but the phrase interpreted means only, that we will go to war for a bale of goods, but not for justice nor for mercy ; and I would ask you to favor me so far as to read this letter to the students at your meeting, and say to them that I heartily wish them well ; but for the present I am too sad to be of any service to them ; that our wars in China and Japan¹ are not likely to furnish good subjects for historical pictures ; that “ ideas ” happen, unfortunately, to be, in Art, the principal things, and that a country which will not fight for its ideas is not likely to have anything worth painting.

I have the honor to be, Sir, your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.

The Secretary of the Liverpool Institute.

[From “The Morning Post,” July 7, 1864.]

THE POSITION OF DENMARK.

To the Editor of “The Morning Post.”

SIR : Will you allow me, in fewest words, to say how deeply I concur in all that is said in that noble letter of Lord Townshend’s published in your columns this morning—except only in its last sentence, “It is time to protest.”¹ Alas ! if protests were of any use, men with hearts and lips would have pro-

¹ The expedition of the English and French against China was begun in the August of 1860 ; the war in Japan in the summer of 1863.

² Lord Townshend’s letter was upon The Circassian Exodus, and pointed out that a committee appointed in 1862 with the object of aiding the tribes of the Caucasus against Russia had failed in obtaining subscriptions, whilst that of 1864, for relieving the sufferers when resistance had become impossible, was more successful. “The few bestowed their sympathy upon the struggle for life ; the many reserved theirs for the agonies of death. . . . To which side, I would ask, do reason and justice incline ?” After commenting on the “tardy consolation for an evil which we have neglected to avert,” and after remarking that “in the national point of view the case of Poland is an exact counterpart to that of Circassia,” the letter thus concluded : “Against such a state of things it is surely time for all who feel as I do to protest.”

tested enough by this time. But they are of none, and can be of none. What true words are worth any man's utterance, while it is possible for such debates as last Monday's to be, and two English gentlemen can stand up before the English Commons to quote Virgil at each other, and round sentences, and show their fineness of wrist in their pretty little venomous carte and tierce of personality, while, even as they speak, the everlasting silence is wrapping the brave massacred Danes?¹ I do not know, never shall know, how this is possible. If a cannon shot carried off their usher's head, nay, carried off but his rod's head, at their room door, they would not round their sentences, I fancy, in asking where the shot came from; but because these infinite masses of advancing slaughter are a few hundred miles distant from them, they can speak their stage speeches out in content. Mr. Gladstone must go to places, it seems, before he can feel! Let him go to Alsen, as he went to Naples,² and quote Virgil to the Prussian army. The English mind, judging by your leaders, seems divided between the German-cannon nuisance and the Savoyard street-organ nuisance; but was there ever hurdy-gurdy like this dissonance of eternal talk?³ The Savoyard at least grinds his

¹ The debate (July 4, 1864) was upon the Danish question and the policy of the Government, and took place just after the end of a temporary armistice and the resumption of hostilities by the bombardment of Alsen, in the Dano-Prussian war. Alsen was taken two days after the publication of this letter. The "two English gentlemen" were Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone (at that time Chancellor of the Exchequer), the latter of whom had quoted the lines from the sixth *Æneid* (ll. 489-491):

"At Danaum proceres Agamennonisque phalanges
Ut vidēre virum fulgentiaque arma per umbras
Ingenti tripedare metu."

² In 1850, when, being at Naples, Mr. Gladstone interested himself deeply in the cause and miserable condition of the political prisoners, and subsequently addressed two letters on the subject to Lord Aberdeen (see "Letters to Lord Aberdeen on the prisoners of the Neapolitan Government:" Murray, 1851).

³ The Morning Post of July 6 contained amongst its leaders one on Denmark and Germany, and another on London street-organs, the nuisance of which had been recently brought before the House of Commons by Mr. M. T. Bass (M.P. for Derby).

handle one way, but these classical discords on the double pipe, like Mr. Kinglake's two tunes—past and present¹—on Savoy and Denmark, need stricter police interference, it seems to me! The cession of Savoy was the peaceful present of a few crags, goats, and goatherds by one king to another; it was also fair pay for fair work, and, in the profoundest sense, no business of ours. Whereupon Mr. Kinglake mewed like a moonstruck cat going to be made a mummy of for Bubastis. But we saw the noble Circassian nation murdered, and never uttered word for them. We saw the noble Polish nation sent to pine in ice, and never struck blow for them. Now the nation of our future Queen calls to us for help in its last agony, and we round sentences and turn our backs. Sir, I have no words for these things, because I have no hope. It is not these squeaking puppets who play before us whom we have to accuse; it is not by cutting the strings of them that we can redeem our deadly error.

We English, as a nation, know not, and care not to know, a single broad or basic principle of human justice. We have only our instincts to guide us. We will hit anybody again who hits us. We will take care of our own families and our own pockets; and we are characterized in our present phase of enlightenment mainly by rage in speculation, lavish expenditure on suspicion or panic, generosity whereon generosity is useless, anxiety for the souls of savages, regardlessness of those of civilized nations, enthusiasm for liberation of blacks, apathy to enslavement of whites, proper horror of regicide, polite respect for populicide, sympathy with those whom we can no longer serve, and reverence for the dead, whom we have ourselves delivered to death.

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, *July 6.*

¹ Mr. Alexander William Kinglake, M.P. for Bridgewater. He spoke at the above-mentioned debate, and had also taken strong interest and part in the cession of Savoy to France by Sardinia in 1860.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," December 20, 1865.]

THE JAMAICA INSURRECTION.

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph."

SIR: Will you allow me, in this informal manner, to express what I should have wished to express by signature of the memorial you publish to-day from Huddersfield¹ respecting the Jamaica insurrection, and to thank you for your excellent article of the 15th December on the same subject. I am compelled to make this request, because I see my friend Mr. Thomas Hughes has been abetting the Radical movement against Governor Eyre; and as I employed what little influence I have with the London workmen to aid the return of Mr. Hughes for Lambeth, I may perhaps be thought to concur with him in every line of action he may see fit subsequently to adopt. Permit me, then, once for all, through your widely-read columns, to say that I did what I could towards the return both of Mr. J. S. Mill and of Mr. Hughes,² not because I held with them in all their opinions, or even in the main principle of their opinions, but because I knew they had a principle of opinions; that they were honest, thoughtful, and benevolent men; and far worthier to be in Parliament (even though it might be in opposition to many causes I had at heart) than any other candidates I knew. They are my opponents in many things, though I thought better of them both than that they would countenance this fatuous outcry

¹ The outcry against Governor Eyre for the course he took in suppressing the negro insurrection at Morant Bay, Jamaica, in 1865, is still within the memory of the general public. Mr. Ruskin attended and spoke at the meetings of the Eyre Defence Fund, to which Mr. Carlyle (see note at the end of this letter) gave his warm support. Amongst those who most strongly deprecated the course taken by Governor Eyre were, as this letter implies, Mr. John Stuart Mill (Chairman of the Jamaica Committee) and Mr. Thomas Hughes.

² Signed by 273 persons resident in and near Huddersfield. (*Daily Telegraph*, December 19, 1865.)

³ Mr. Mill had been recently returned for Westminster, and Mr. Hughes for Lambeth.

against Governor Eyre. But in most directions of thought and action they are for Liberty, and I am for Lordship ; they are Mob's men and I am a King's man. Yes, sir, I am one of those almost forgotten creatures who shrivel under your daily scorn ; I am a " Conservative," and hope forever to be a Conservative in the deepest sense—a Re-former, not a De-former. Not that I like slavery, or object to the emancipation of any kind or number of blacks in due place and time. But I understand something more by "slavery" than either Mr. J. S. Mill or Mr. Hughes ; and believe that white emancipation not only ought to precede, but must by law of all fate precede, black emancipation. I much dislike the slavery, to man, of an African laborer, with a spade on his shoulder ; but I more dislike the slavery, to the devil, of a Calabrian robber with a gun on his shoulder. I dislike the American serf-economy, which separates, occasionally, man and wife ; but I more dislike the English serf-economy, which prevents men from being able to have wives at all. I dislike the slavery which obliges women (if it does) to carry their children over frozen rivers ; but I more dislike the slavery which makes them throw their children into wells. I would willingly hinder the selling of girls on the Gold Coast ; but primarily, if I might, would hinder the selling of them in Mayfair. And, finally, while I regret the need that may exist among savages in a distant island for their governor to do his work sharply and suddenly on them, I far more regret the need among men of race and capacity for the work of governors when they have no governor to give it them. Of all dishonorable and impious captivities of this age, the darkest was that of England to Russia, by which she was compelled to refuse to give Greece a King when Greece besought one from her, and to permit that there should be set on the Acropolis throne no Governor Eyre, nor anything like him, but such a shadow of King as the black fates cast upon a nation for a curse, saying, "Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child !"¹

¹ The present king of Greece was only eighteen years of age when, after the protocol of England, Russia, and France on the preceding day, he accepted, June 6, 1863, the crown of Greece.

Let the men who would now ~~deserve~~ well of England reserve their impeachments, or turn them ~~from~~ those among us who have saved colonies to those who have ~~destroyed~~ nations.

I am, Sir, yours, etc.,

J. RUSKIN.¹

DENMARK HILL, Dec. 19.

(From "The Daily Telegraph," October 7, 1870.)

THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR.

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph."

SIR: My friends ask me why I speak no word about this war, supposing—like vain friends as they are—that I might have some poor influence of intercession for filigree-work, French clocks, and other tender articles of vertu, felt at this moment to be in grave danger.

But, in the first place, I know that the just Fates will reward no intercession, either for human life or chinaware, until their will has been accomplished upon all of us. In the second, I know also that the German armies will spare what they can, and think they ought, without taking advice of me. In the third, I have said long ago—no one listening—the best I had to say on these matters.

But, after your notice to-day of the escape of M. Edouard Frère,² whose gentle power I was, I believe, the first to recog-

¹ It is of interest to remark that Mr. Carlyle, in a letter to Mr. Hamilton Hume, Hon. Sec. of the "Eyre Defence Fund" (published in the Daily Telegraph of September 12, 1866), expressed himself as follows: "The clamor raised against Governor Eyre appears to me to be disgraceful to the good sense of England; . . . penalty and clamor are not the things this Governor merits from any of us, but honor and thanks, and wise imitation. . . . The whole weight of my conviction and good wishes is with you." Mr. Carlyle was, with Sir Roderick Murchison, one of the two vice-presidents of the Defence Committee. (See The History of the Jamaica Case, by G. W. Finlason: London, 1869, p. 369.)

² M. Edouard Frère and Mdlle. Rosa Bonheur were allowed to leave Paris and pass the lines of the Prussian army after the blockade of the French capital had been begun. For Mr. Ruskin's early recognition of

nize publicly in England, it is possible that some of your readers may care to look back at what I wrote of modern war four years ago, and to know the aspect it takes to me, now that it has come to pass.

If you will reprint these few following sentences for me from the "Crown of Wild Olive,"¹ I shall be able to-morrow to put what I would add to them briefly enough to claim little space in your columns:

If you have to take away masses of men from all industrial employment—to feed them by the labor of others—to move them, and provide them with destructive machines, varied daily in national rivalry of inventive cost; if you have to ravage the country which you attack—to destroy for a score of future years, its roads, its woods, its cities, and its harbors; and if, finally, having brought masses of men, counted by hundreds of thousands, face to face, you tear those masses to pieces with jagged shot, and leave fragments of living creatures, countless beyond all help of surgery, to starve and parch, through days of torture, down into clots of clay—what book of accounts shall record the cost of your work—what book of judgment sentence the guilt of it?

That, I say, is *modern war*—scientific war—chemical and mechanical war—worse even than the savage's poisoned arrow. And yet you will tell me, perhaps, that any other war than this is impossible now. It may be so; the progress of science cannot, perhaps, be otherwise registered than by new facilities

M. Frère's power, see the Academy Notes, No. II. (1856), p. 47, where some "cottage studies" are spoken of as "quite unequalled in sincerity and truth of conception, though somewhat dimly painted;"—No. III. (1857), p. 58, where his pictures are said to "unite the depth of Wordsworth, the grace of Reynolds, and the holiness of Angelico;"—and No. IV. (1858), p. 33, where this last expression of praise is emphasized and at some length explained.

¹ See for the first two paragraphs of extracts following pp. 170, 171 of the original, and §§ 102-3 of the 1873 edition of the *Crown of Wild Olive*; for the third paragraph, pp. 116-118, and § 74; and for the last two paragraphs, pp. 186, 187, and §§ 113, 114, respectively, of those two editions.

of destruction; and the brotherly love of our enlarging Christianity be only proved by multiplication of murder.

But the wonder has always been great to me that heroism has never been supposed consistent with the practice of supplying people with food, or clothes, but only with that of quartering one's self upon them for food, and stripping them of their clothes. Spoiling of armor is an heroic deed in all ages; but the selling of clothes, old or new, has never taken any color of magnanimity. Yet one does not see why feeding the hungry and clothing the naked should ever become base businesses even when engaged in on a large scale. If one could contrive to attach the notion of conquest to *them* anyhow? so that, supposing there were anywhere an obstinate race, who refused to be comforted, one might take some pride in giving them compulsory comfort, and, as it were, "occupying a country" with one's gifts, instead of one's armies? If one could only consider it as much a victory to get a barren field sown as to an eared field stripped; and contend who should build villages, instead of who should "carry" them? Are not all forms of heroism conceivable in doing these serviceable deeds? You doubt who is strongest? It might be ascertained by push of spade as well as push of sword. Who is wisest? There are witty things to be thought of in planning other business than campaigns. Who is bravest? There are always the elements to fight with, stronger than men; and nearly as merciless.

And, then, observe farther, this true power, the power of saving, depends neither on multitude of men, nor on extent of territory. We are continually assuming that nations become strong according to their numbers. They indeed become so, if those numbers can be made of one mind. But how are you sure you can stay them in one mind, and keep them from having north and south minds? Grant them unanimous, how know you they will be unanimous in right? If they are unanimous in wrong, the more they are, essentially the weaker they are. Or, suppose that they can neither be of one mind, nor of two minds, but can only be of *no* mind? Suppose they are a mere helpless mob, tottering into precipitant catastrophe,

like a wagon-load of stones when the wheel comes off? Dangerous enough for their neighbors certainly, but not "powerful."

Neither does strength depend on extent of territory, any more than upon number of population. Take up your masses, put the cluster of the British Isles beside the mass of South America, and then consider whether any race of men need consider how much ground they stand upon. The strength is in the men, and in their unity and virtue, not in their standing-room. A little group of wise hearts is better than a wilderness full of fools; and only that nation gains true territory which gains itself.

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, S.E., Oct. 6th.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," October 8, 1870.]

THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR.

To the Editor of "*The Daily Telegraph*."

SIR: As I am always blamed if I approach my subject on any but its picturesque side, it is well for me that in to-day's *Times* I find it announced that at Strasburg the Picture Gallery—with the pictures in it?—the Library—with the books in it?—and the Theatre, with certainly two hundred persons in it, have been burnt to the ground under an auxiliary cannonade, the flames at night being "a tempting target." It is true that in your columns I find the consolatory news that the Parisians are repairing those losses by casting a bronze Strasburg;¹ but if, as a poor art professor, I may venture an opinion, I would fain suggest to them that if their own picture gallery, with the pictures and bits of marble in it—Venus

¹ The Daily Telegraph of Oct. 7 contained amongst its Paris news that of the decision of the Government of National Defence to cast a statue of the city of Strasburg in bronze, in memory of its "heroic resistance to the enemy during a murderous siege of fifty days."

of Melos and the like—and their own Library—Royal, Impériale, Nationale, or whatever they now call it—should presently become tempting targets also by the light of their own flames, the casting of a bronze Paris, in even the most imposing of attitudes, will scarcely redeem their loss, were it but to the admiring eyes of Paris itself.

There is yet another letter in the *Times*,¹ of more importance than the one from Strasburg. It is headed, “The Difficulties of Neutrality,” dated Bonn, and anticipates part of what I was going to say ; for the rest, the lessons of the war, as I read them, are briefly these.

As to its cause, neither the French nation nor their Emperor brought on war by any present will of their own. Neither of them were capable of a will at all—far less of executing it. The nation has since declared, by submission, with acclaim, to a change of Government which for the time renders all political treaty with it practically impossible, that during the last twenty years it has been deceived or subdued into obedience to a man for whom it had no respect, and who had no hereditary claim to the throne. What “will” or responsibility of action can be expected from a nation which confesses this of itself ? On the other hand, the Emperor, be his motives never so selfish, could only have hoped to save his dynasty by compliance with the passions of a populace which he knew would overthrow it in the first hour of their mortification. It is in these vain passions and the falsehoods on which they have fed that we must look for the deep roots of all this misery. Since the days of the First Empire, no cottage in France has been without its Napoleonic picture and legend, fostering one and the same faith in the heart of every

¹ This letter was signed “W. C. P.,” who, after stating himself to be an English resident in Germany, proceeded to lament the changed position of England in the opinion of foreign nations, and especially in that of the Germans, who no longer spoke of her, as formerly, “with affectionate admiration or even envious respect.” “And I must confess,” concluded the letter, “that I find it difficult to answer them ; for it seems to me that we have already good reason to say, in reference to the present struggle, ‘All is lost save money.’”—*Times*, October 7, 1870.

peasant boy, that there is no glory but in battle ; and since the founding of the Second Empire no street of any city has risen into its foolish magnificence without collateral proclamation that there was no pleasure but in vice.

Then, secondly, for the actual question of the war : it is a simple and testing struggle between pure Republicanism on the one side, expressed in the most exquisite, finished, and exemplary anarchy, yet achieved under—earth—and one of the truest Monarchies and schools of honor and obedience yet organized under heaven. And the secret of its strength, we have to note, is essentially pacific ; for all the wars of the Great Friedrich would have passed away resultless—as great wars usually do—had it not been for this pregnant fact at the end of them : “All his artillery horses are parted into plough-teams, and given to those who otherwise can get none” (Carlyle, vol. vi., first edition, p. 350)—that 21st book on the repair of Prussia being of extant literature the most important piece for us to read and digest in these days of “raising the poor without gifts”—never asking who first let them fall—and of turning workmen out of dockyards, without any consciousness that, of all the stores in the yard, the men were exactly the most precious. You expressed, Sir, in your article on the loss of the Captain,¹ a feeling common, I suppose, for once, to all of us, that the principal loss was not the iron of the ship, but the five hundred men in her. Perhaps, had she been of gold instead of iron plate, public mourning might have inclined itself to the side of the metal. But how if the whole British public should be itself at this instant afloat in a captainless Captain, built of somewhat dirty yet substantial gold, and in extremest peril of turning bottom upwards ? Which will be the end, indeed, unless the said public quickly perceive that their hope must be, not in docks nor ships, but in men. They, and they only, are our guarantee for territory. Prussia herself seems as simple as the rest of us in her talk of

¹ The turret ship *Captain* foundered off Cape Finisterre on September 7, 1870. For the articles alluded to, see the *Daily Telegraph* of September 12 and following days.

"guarantees." Alsace and Lorraine, if dishonestly come by, may be honestly retaken ; but if for "guarantee," why these only ? Why not Burgundy and Anjou—Auvergne and the Limousin ? Let France lose what she may, if she can but find a Charles and Roland among her children, she will recover her empire, though she had been beaten back to the Brèche ; and if she find them not Germany has all the guarantee she needs in her own name, and in her own right hand.

Let her look to it, now, that her fame be not sullied. She is pressing her victory too far—dangerously far, as uselessly. The Nemesis of battle may indeed be near her ; greater glory she cannot win by the taking of Paris, nor the overrunning of provinces—she only prolongs suffering, redoubles death, extends loss, incalculable and irremediable. But let her now give unconditional armistice, and offer terms that France can accept with honor, and she will bear such rank among the nations as never yet shone on Christian history.

For us, we ought to help France now, if we ever did anything, but of course there remains for us only neutrality—selling of coke, and silence (if we have grace enough left to keep it). I have only broken mine to say that I am ashamed to speak as being one of a nation regardless of its honor alike in trade and policy ; poor, yet not careful to keep even the treasure of probity—and rich, without being able to afford itself the luxury of courage.

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

Oct. 7.

J. RUSKIN.

[From "*Fraser's Magazine*," July, 1876, pp. 121-123.]

MODERN WARFARE

To the Editor of "Fraser's Magazine."

SIR : The article on modern warfare in your last June number¹ contains statements of so great importance to public interests, that I do not hesitate to ask you to spare me space for

¹ Remarks on Modern Warfare. By a Military Officer. The article was signed "P. S. C."

a question or two respecting it, which by answering, your contributor may make the facts he has brought forward more valuable for practical issues.

The statistics¹ given in the second column of page 695, on which P. S. C. rests his "incontestable" conclusion that "battles are less sanguinary than they were," are incomplete in this vital respect, that they furnish us only with the proportion, and not with the total number, of combatants slain. A barricade fight between a mob of rioters a thousand strong and a battery of artillery, in which fifty reformers get shot, is not "less sanguinary" than a street quarrel between three toppers, of whom one gets knocked on the head with a pewter pot: though no more than the twentieth part of the forces on one side fall in the first case, and a third of the total forces engaged, in the second. Nor could it be proved by the exhibition of these proportions of loss, that the substitution of explosive shells, as offensive weapons, for pewter pots, rendered wounds less painful, or war more humane.

Now, the practical difference between ancient and modern war, as carried on by civilized nations, is, broadly, of this kind. Formerly, the persons who had quarrelled settled their differences by the strength of their own arms, at the head of their retainers, with comparatively inexpensive weapons such as they could conveniently wield: weapons which they had paid for out of their own pockets, and with which they struck only the people they meant to strike: while, nowadays, persons who quarrel fight at a distance, with mechanical apparatus, for the manufacture of which they have taxed the public, and which will kill anybody who happens to be in the way; gathering at the same time, to put into the way of them, as large a quantity of senseless and innocent mob as can be beguiled, or compelled, to the slaughter. So that, in the words of your contributor, "Modern armies are not now small fractions of the population whence they are drawn; they represent—in fact are—whole nations in arms." I have only to correct this somewhat vague and rhetorical statement by pointing out that the

¹ See the tables given in this letter (p. 236).

persons in arms, led out for mutual destruction, are by no means "the whole nation" on either side, but only the individuals of it who are able-bodied, honest, and brave, selected to be shot, from among its invalids, rogues, and cowards.

The deficiencies in your contributor's evidence as to the totality of loss do not, however, invalidate his conclusion that, out of given numbers engaged, the mitrailleuse kills fewer than the musket.* It is, nevertheless, a very startling conclusion, and one not to be accepted without closer examination of the statistics on which it is based. I will, therefore, tabulate them in a simpler form, which the eye can catch easily, omitting only one or two instances which add nothing to the force of the evidence.

In the six under-named battles of bygone times, there fell, according to your contributor's estimate, out of the total combatants—

At Austerlitz.....	1/7
Jena.....	1/6
Waterloo.....	1/5
Marengo.....	1/4
Salamanca.....	1/3
Eylau.....	1/2½

while in the under-named five recent battles the proportion of loss was—

At Königgratz.....	1/15
Gravelotte.....	1/12
Solferino.....	1/11
Worth.....	1/11
Sedan.....	1/10

Now, there is a very important difference in the character of the battles named in these two lists. Every one of the first six was decisive, and both sides knew that it must be so when the engagement began, and did their best to win. But Königgratz was only decisive by sudden and appalling demonstration of the power of a new weapon. Solferino was only half fought,

* "The proportion of killed and wounded," wrote P. S. C., "was far greater with the old-fashioned weapons than it is at the present day."

and not followed up because the French Emperor had exhausted his *corps d'élite* at Magenta, and could not (or, at least, so it is reported) depend on his troops of the line. Worth was an experiment ; Sedan a discouraged ruin ; Gravelotte was, I believe, well contested, but I do not know on what extent of the line, and we have no real evidence as to the power of modern mechanics for death, until the proportions are calculated, not from the numbers engaged, but from those under fire for equal times. Now, in all the upper list of battles, probably every man of both armies was under fire, and some of the regiments under fire for half the day ; while in the lower list of battles, only fragments of the line were hotly engaged, and the dispute on any point reaching its intensity would be ended in half an hour.

That the close of contest is so rapid may indeed be one of the conditions of improvement in our military system alleged by your correspondent ; and the statistics he has brought forward do indeed clearly prove one of two things—either that modern weapons do not kill, or that modern soldiers do not fight as effectually as in old times. I do not know if this is thought a desirable change in military circles ; but I, as a poor civilian, beg to express my strong objection to being taxed six times over what I used to be, either for the equipment of soldiers who rarely fight, or the manufacture of weapons which rarely kill. It may be perfectly true that our last cruise on the Baltic was “ less sanguinary ” than that which concluded in Copenhagen. But we shook hands with the Danes after fighting them, and the differences between us were ended : while our expensive contemplation of the defences of Cronstadt leaves us still in daily dread of an inspection by the Russian of those of Calcutta.

It is true that the ingenuity of our inventors is far from being exhausted, and that in a few years more we may be able to destroy a regiment round a corner and bombard a fleet over the horizon ; but I believe the effective result of these crowning scientific successes will only be to confirm the at present partial impression on the minds of military and naval officers, that their duty is rather to take care of their weapons than to use

them. "England will expect" of her generals and admirals to maintain a dignified moral position as far as possible out of the enemy's sight : and in a perfectly scientific era of seamanship we shall see two adverse fleets affected by a constant law of mutual repulsion at distances of two or three hundred miles ; while in either squadron, an occasional collision between the leading ships, or inexplicable foundering of the last improved ones, will make these prudential manœuvres on the whole as destructive of the force, and about ten times more costly to the pocket, of the nation, than the ancient, and, perhaps, more honorable tactics of poorly-armed pugnacity.

There is, however, one point touched upon in P. S. C.'s letter, to me the most interesting of all, with respect to which the data for accurate comparison of our former and present systems are especially desirable, though it never seems to have occurred to your correspondent to collect them—the estimates, namely, of the relative destruction of civil property.

Of wilful destruction, I most thankfully acknowledge the cessation in Christian warfare ; and in the great change between the day of the sack of Magdeburg and that of the march into Paris, recognize a true sign of the approach of the reign of national peace. But of inevitable destruction—of loss inflicted on the peasant by the merely imperative requirements and operations of contending armies—it will materially hasten the advent of such peace, if we ascertain the increasing pressure during our nominally mollified and merciful war. The agricultural losses sustained by France in one year are estimated by your correspondent at one hundred and seventy millions of pounds. Let him add to this sum the agricultural loss necessitated in the same year throughout Germany, through the withdrawal of capital from productive industry, for the maintenance of her armies ; and of labour from it by their composition ; and, for third item, add the total cost of weapons, horses, and ammunition on both sides ; and let him then inform us whether the cost, thus summed, of a year's actual war between two European States, is supposed by military authorities to be fairly representative of that which the settlement of political dispute between any two such Powers,

with modern instruments of battle, will on an average, in future, involve. If so, I will only venture further to suggest that the nations minded thus to try their quarrel should at least raise the stakes for their match before they make the ring, instead of drawing bills for them upon futurity. For that the money-lenders whose pockets are filled, while everybody else's are emptied, by recent military finance, should occultly exercise irresistible influence, not only on the development of our—according to your contributor—daily more harmless armaments, but also on the deliberation of Cabinets, and passions of the populace, is inevitable under present circumstances ; and the exercise of such influence, however advantageous to contractors and projectors, can scarcely be held consistent either with the honor of a Senate or the safety of a State.

I am, Sir,

Your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.

P. S.—I wish I could get a broad approximate estimate of the expenditure in money, and loss of men by France and Prussia in the respective years of Jena and Sedan, and by France and Austria in the respective years of Arcole and Solferino.

LETTERS ON POLITICAL ECONOMY.

[From "The Times," October 8, 1863.]

THE DEPRECIATION OF GOLD.

To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR: Being out of the way of my letters, I did not, till now, see your excellent article of the 23d September on the depreciation of gold.¹ Will you allow me, thus late, a very few words in confirmation of your statement of the insufficiency of the evidence hitherto offered on that subject?

The market value of "a pound" depends less on the supply of gold than on the extravagance or economy of the persons holding documentary currency (that is to say, claim to goods). Suppose, for instance, that I hold stock to the value of £500 a year;—if I live on a hundred a year, and lay by four hundred, I (for the time) keep down the prices of all goods to the distributed amount of £400 a year, or, in other words, neutralize the effect on the market of 400 pounds in gold imported annually from Australia. If, instead of laying by this sum in paper, I choose to throw it into bullion (whether gold-plate or coin does not matter), I not only keep down the price of goods, but raise the price of gold as a commodity, and neutralize 800 pounds' worth of imported gold. But if I annually spend my entire 500 (unproductively) I annually raise the price of goods by that amount, and neutralize a correspondent diminution in the supply of gold. If I spend my 500 productively, that is to say, so as to produce as much as, or more than I consume, I either leave the market as I find it, or by the excess of production increase the value of gold.

¹ See one of the leading articles in *The Times* of Sept. 23, 1863, upon the then panic as to the depreciation of gold, excited by the considerable fresh discoveries of the precious metal in California and Australia.

Similarly, whatever I lay by will, as it is ultimately spent by my successors, productively or unproductively, in that degree (*cæteris paribus*) increase or lower the value of gold. These agencies of daily economy have so much more power over the market than the supply from the mine that no statistics of which we are yet in possession are (at least in their existing form) sufficient to prove the dependence of any given phenomena of the market on the rate of metallic supply. The destruction of property in the American war and our European amusements in the manufacture of monster guns and steel "backings" lower the value of money far more surely and fatally than an increased supply of bullion, for the latter may very possibly excite parallel force of productive industry.

But the lowered value of money is often (and this is a very curious case of economical back current) indicated, not so much by a rise in the price of goods, as by a fall in that of labor. The household lives as comfortably as it did on a hundred a year, but the master has to work half as hard again to get it. This increase of toil is to an active nation often a kind of play; men go into it as into a violent game; fathers of families die quicker, and the gates of orphan asylums are choked with applicants; distress and crime spread and fester through a thousand silent channels; but there is no commercial or elementary convulsion; no chasm opens into the abyss through the London clay; no gilded victim is asked of the Guards: the Stock-Exchange falls into no hysterics; and the old lady of Threadneedle Street does not so much as ask for "My fan, Peter."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. RUSKIN.

CHAMOUNIX, Oct. 2.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," October 28, 1864.]

THE LAW OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND.

To the Editor of "*The Daily Telegraph*."

SIR: In your valuable article of to-day on the strike of the colliers, while you lay down the true and just law¹ respect-

¹ The strike was amongst the South Staffordshire colliers: the law laid down in the article that of free trade.

ing all such combinations, you take your stand, in the outset, on a maxim of political economy, which, however trite, stands yet—if I am not deceived—in need of much examination and qualification. “Labor,” you say, like every other vendible commodity, “depends for its value on the relation of supply to demand.” But, Sir, might it not be asked by any simple and practical person, who had heard this assertion for the first time—as I hope all practical persons will some day hear it for the last time—“Yes; but what does demand depend upon, and what does supply depend upon?” If, for instance, all death-beds came to resemble that so forcibly depicted in your next following article, and in consequence, the demand for gin were unlimitedly increased towards the close of human life,¹ would this demand necessitate, or indicate, a relative increase in the “value” of gin as a necessary article of national wealth, and liquid foundation of national prosperity? Or might we not advisably make some steady and generally understood distinction between the terms “value” and “price,” and determine at once whether there be, or be not, such a thing as intrinsic “value” or goodness in some things, and as intrinsic unvalue or badness in other things; and as value extrinsic, or according to use, in all things? and whether a demand for intrinsically good things, and a corresponding knowledge of their use, be not conditions likely, on the whole, to tend towards national wealth? and whether a demand for intrinsically bad things, and relative experience in their use, be not conditions likely to lead to quite the reverse of national wealth, in exact proportion to the facility of the supply of the said bad things? I should be entirely grateful to you, Sir, or to any of your correspondents, if you or they would answer these short questions clearly for me.

I am, Sir, yours, etc.,

DENMARK HILL, Oct. 26.

J. RUSKIN.²

¹ Upon the then recent and miserable death of an Irish gentleman, who had been an habitual hard-drinker.

² To this letter an answer (*Daily Telegraph*, October 29) was attempted by “*Economist*,” writing from “*Lloyds*, Oct. 28,” stating that “Value in political economy means exchangeable value, not intrinsic value.” The rest of his letter is given in Mr. Ruskin’s reply to it.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," October 31, 1864.]

THE LAW OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND.

To the Editor of "*The Daily Telegraph*."

SIR : I am grateful to your correspondent "Economist" for trying his hand on me, and will be a docile pupil ; but I hope his hand is not quite untried hitherto, for it would waste your space, and my time, and your readers' patience, if he taught me what I had afterwards to unlearn. But I think none of these will be wasted if he answers my questions clearly ; there are, I am sure, many innocent persons who, like myself, will be glad of the information.

1. He tells me, then, in the outset, "The intrinsic value of commodities is a question outside political economy."

Is that an axiom for all political economists ? and may I put it down for future reference ? I particularly wish to be assured of this.

2. Assuming, for the present, that I may so set it down, and that exchangeable value is the only subject of politico-economical inquiry, I proceed to my informant's following statement :

"The" (question) "of intrinsic value belongs to the domain of philosophy, morals, or statecraft. The intrinsic value of anything depends on its qualities ; the exchangeable value depends on how much there is of it, and how much people want it."

(This "want" of it never, of course, in anywise depending on its qualities.)

Marbano. Accordingly, in that ancient and rashly-speculative adage, "Venture a sprat to catch a herring," it is only assumed that people will always want herrings rather than sprats, and that there will always be fewer of them. No reference is involved, according to economists, to the relative sizes of a sprat and herring.

Farther : Were a fashionable doctor to write an essay on sprats, and increase their display at West-end tables to that extent that unseasonable sprats became worth a guinea a head, while herrings remained at the old nursery rate of one and a half for three-halfpence, would my "recognition" of the value

of sprats in paying a guinea for one enable me to dine off it better than I should off that mysterious eleven-pennyworth of herring? Or to take a more elevated instance. There is now on my room wall a water-color drawing, which was once bought for £30, and for which any dealer would to-morrow give me £300. The drawing is intrinsically worth about one-tenth of what it was when bought for £30, the sky having faded out of it, and many colors having changed elsewhere. But men's minds have changed like the colors, and Lord A. or Sir John B. are now ready to give me £300 instead of £30 for it.

Now, I want to know what it matters to "Economist," or to the Economical Society he (as I understand) represents, or to the British nation generally, whether Lord A. has the bit of colored paper and I the £300, or Lord A. the £300 and I the bit of paper. The pounds are there, and the paper is there: what does it nationally matter which of us have which?

Farther: What does it nationally matter whether Lord A. gives me £30 or £300 on the exchange? (Mind, I do not say it does not matter—I only want "Economist" to tell me if it does, and how it does.) In one case my lord has £270 more to spend; in the other I have. What does it signify which of us has?

Farther: To us, the exchangers, of what use is "Economist's" information that the rate of exchange depends on the "demand and supply" of colored paper and pounds? No ghost need come from the grave to tell us that. But if any economical ghost would tell my lord how to get more pounds, or me how to get more drawings, it might be to the purpose.

But yet farther, passing from specialties to generals:

Let the entire property of the nation be enumerated in the several articles of which it consists—*a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, etc.; we will say only three, for convenience sake. Then all the national property consists of $a + b + c$.

I ask, first, what *a* is worth.

"Economist" answers (suppose) 2 *b*.

I ask, next, what *b* is worth.

"Economist" answers (suppose) 3 *c*.

I ask, next, what *c* is worth.

"Economist" answers— $\frac{2}{3}$.

Many thanks. That is certainly Cocker's view of it.

I ask, finally, What is it *all* worth?

"Economist" answers, $1\frac{2}{3} a$, or $3\frac{1}{3} b$, or $10 c$.

Thanks again. But now, intrinsic value not being in "Economist's" domain, but—if I chance to be a philosopher—in mine, I may any day discover any given intrinsic value to belong to any one of these articles.

Suppose I find, for instance, the value of c to be intrinsically zero, then the entire national property $= 10 c =$ intrinsically 0.

Shall I be justified in this conclusion?

3. In relation to the question of strikes, the difficulty, you told me yourself, Mr. Editor¹ (and doubtless "Economist" will tell me also), depends simply on supply and demand: that is to say, on an under-supply of wages and an over-supply of laborers. Profoundest thanks again; but I, poor blundering, thick-headed collier, feel disposed further to ask, "On what do this underness and overness of supply depend?" Have they any remote connection with marriage, or with improvidence, or with avarice, or with accumulativeness, or any other human weaknesses out of the ken of political economy? And, whatever they arise from, how are they to be dealt with? It appears to me, poor simple collier, that the shortest way of dealing with this "darned" supply of laborers will be by knocking some of them down, or otherwise disabling them for the present. Why is this mode of regulating the supply interdicted to me? and what have Economists to do with the morality of any proceeding whatever? and, in the name of economy generally, what else can I do?

I am, Sir, yours, etc.,

DENMARK HILL, Oct. 29. [Monday.]

J. RUSKIN.

¹ See *ante*, p. 241.

"Economist" does not seem to have continued his argument. A reply to this letter was however attempted by "John Plummer," writing from Kettering, and dealing with the over-supply of laborers and under-supply of wages, and Mr. Ruskin's possible views on the matter. The next letter ended the correspondence.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," November 3, 1864.]

THE LAW OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND.

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph."

SIR : Having, unfortunately, occupation enough in my own business for all hours of the day, I cannot undertake to reply to the general correspondence which might, in large supply to my limited demand, propose itself in your columns. If my first respondent, "Economist," or any other person learned in his science, will give me direct answers to the direct questions asked in my Monday's letter, I may, with your permission, follow the points at issue farther ; if not, I will trouble you no more. Your correspondent of to-day, Mr. Plummer, may ascertain whether I confuse the terms "value" and "price" by reference to the bottom of the second column in page 787 of *Fraser's Magazine* for June, 1862. Of my opinions respecting the treatment of the working classes he knows nothing, and can guess nothing.¹

I am, Sir, yours, etc.,

DENMARK HILL, Nov. 2.

J. RUSKIN.

[From "The Scotsman," November 10, 1873.]

MR. RUSKIN AND PROFESSOR HODGSON.

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,
Nov. 8th, 1873.

To the Editor of "The Scotsman."

SIR : In your impression of the 6th inst. I find a report of a lecture delivered by Professor Hodgson in the University of Edinburgh on the subject of "Supply and Demand," in which the Professor speaks of my "denunciations" of the principles he had expounded. Permit me, in a matter respecting which accuracy is of more importance to others than to myself, to correct the Professor's expression. I have never "denounced" the principles expounded by the Professor. I have simply

¹ In the *Essays on Political Economy*, since reprinted as *Munera Pulveris*. See p. 24, § 12 of that book, where the passage is printed in italics: "The reader must, by anticipation, be warned against confusing value with cost, or with price. Value is the life-giving power of anything; cost, the quantity of labor required to produce it; price, the quantity of labor which its possessor will take in exchange for it."

stated that no such principles exist ; that no "law of supply and demand," as expounded by Professor Hodgson and modern economists, ever did or can exist.

Professor Hodgson, as reported in your columns, states that "demand regulates supply." He does not appear to entertain the incomparably more important economical question, "What regulates demand?" But without pressing upon him that first question of all, I am content absolutely to contradict and to challenge him before the University of Edinburgh to maintain his statement that "demand regulates supply," and together with it (if he has ventured to advance it) the correlative proposition, "supply regulates demand."

A. Demand does not regulate supply.

For instance—there is at this moment a larger demand for champagne wine in England and Scotland than there was ten years ago ; and a much more limited supply of champagne wine.

B. Supply does not regulate demand.

For instance I can name many districts in Scotland where the supply of pure water is larger than in other namable localities, but where the inhabitants drink less water and more whiskey than in other namable localities.

I do not therefore denounce the so-called law of supply and demand, but I absolutely deny the existence of such law ; and I do in the very strongest terms denounce the assertion of the existence of such a law before the University of Edinburgh as disgraceful both to its assertor and to the University, unless immediate steps be taken to define, in scientific terms, the limitations under which such statement is to be understood.

I am, etc.,

JOHN RUSKIN.¹

[From the "Scotsman," November 18, 1873.]

MR. RUSKIN AND PROFESSOR HODGSON.

OXFORD, November 15, 1873.

To the Editor of "The Scotsman."

SIR : For Professor Hodgson's "undue encroachments on your space and his own time," I leave you to answer to your

¹ To this letter Professor Hodgson replied by one printed in the Scotsman of November 14.

readers, and the Professor to console his class. To his criticisms on my language and temper I bow, their defence being irrelevant to the matter in hand. Of his harmless confusion of the word "correlative" with the word "consequent" I take no notice; and his promise of a sifting examination of my economic teaching I anticipate with grateful awe.¹

But there is one sentence in his letter of real significance, and to that alone I reply. The Professor ventured (he says) to suggest that possibly I with others "believe that economists confused existing demand with wise and beneficial demand, and existing supply with wise and beneficial supply."

I do believe this. I have written all my books on political economy in such belief. And the entire gist of them is the assertion that a real law of relation holds between the non-existent wise demand and the non-existent beneficial supply, but that no real law of relation holds between the existent foolish demand and the existent mischievous supply.

That is to say (to follow Professor Hodgson with greater accuracy into his lunar illustrations), if you ask for the moon, it does not follow that you will get it; nor is your satisfaction more secure if you ask for sixpence from a Poor-Law guardian; but if you limit your demand to an honest penny, and endeavor to turn it by honest work, the divine law of supply will, in the plurality of cases, answer that rational and therefore divine demand.

Now, Professor Hodgson's statement, as reported in your columns, was that "demand regulates supply." If his assertion, in his lecture, was the qualified one, or that "wise demand regulates beneficial supply," your reporter is much to be blamed, the Professor's class profoundly to be congratulated, and this correspondence is at an end; while I look forward with deepest interest to the necessary elucidations by the Professor of the nature of wisdom and benefit; neither of these ideas having been yet familiar ones in common economical treatises. But I wrote under the impression that the Professor

¹ "I hereby promise Mr. Ruskin that ere very many months are over he shall have in print a sifting examination of his economic teaching." I do not find, however, that Professor Hodgson fulfilled his promise.

dealt hitherto, as it has been the boast of economists to deal, with things existent, and not theoretical (and assuredly the practical men of this country expect their children to be instructed by him in the laws which govern existing things); and it is therefore only in the name of your practical readers that I challenged him, and to-day repeat my challenge, in terms from which I trust he will not again attempt to escape by circumambient criticism of my works,¹ to define, in scientific terms, the limits under which his general statement that "supply regulates demand" is to be understood. That is to say, whether he, as Professor of Political Economy, is about to explain the relations (A) of rational and satiable demand with beneficial and benevolently-directed supply; or (B) of irrational and insatiable demand with mischievous and malevolently-directed supply; or (C) of a demand of which he cannot explain the character with a supply of which he cannot predict the consequence?

I am, etc.,

J. RUSKIN.

[From "The Pall Mall Gazette," April 18, 1885.]

STRIKES v. ARBITRATION.

To the Editor of "The Pall Mall Gazette."

SIR: I read your *Gazette* so attentively that I am always falling into arrears, and have only to-day arrived at your last week's articles on strikes, arbitration, etc., which afford me the greatest satisfaction, but nevertheless embarrass me somewhat. Will you permit me to ask for a word or two of further elucidation?

I am an entirely selfish person, and having the means of indulging myself (in moderation), should, I believe, have led a comfortable life, had it not been for occasional fits and twinges of conscience, to which I inherit some family predisposition, and from which I suffer great uneasiness in cloudy weather.

¹ Professor Hodgson's letter had quoted, with criticism, several passages from *Fors Clavigera*, *Munera Pulveris*, and *Time and Tide*.

Articles like yours of Wednesday,¹ on the proper attention to one's own interests, are very comforting and helpful to me; but, as I said, there are yet some points in them I do not understand.

Of course it is right to arrange all one's business with reference to one's own interest; but what will the practical difference be ultimately between such arrangement and the old and simple conscientious one? In those bygone days, I remember, one endeavored, with such rough estimate as could be quickly made, to give one's Roland for one's Oliver; if a man did you a service, you tried in return to do as much for him; if he broke your head, you broke his, shook hands, and were both the better for it. Contrariwise, on this modern principle of self-interest, I understand very well that if a man does me a service, I am always to do the least I can in return for it; but I don't see how I am always to get more out of him than he gets out of me. I dislike any references to abstract justice as much as you do, but I cannot see my way to keeping this injustice always in my own favor; and if I cannot, it seems to me the matter may as well be settled at first, as it must come to be settled at last, in that disagreeably just way.

Thus, for instance, in producing a piece of iron for the market, one man digs it, another smelts it, another puddles it, and I sell it. We get so much between us four; and I suppose your conscientious people would say that the division of the pay should have some reference to the hardness of the work, and the time spent in it. It is true that by encouraging the diggers and puddlers to spend all they get in drink, and by

¹ The articles alluded to were, one upon "Strikes and Arbitration Courts," in the Gazette of Wednesday, the 12th, and one on "The Times on Trade Arbitration," in the Gazette of Thursday, the 13th. The former dealt with the proposal to decide questions raised by strikes by reference to courts of arbitration. Amongst the sentences contained in it, and alluded to by Mr. Ruskin, were the following: "Phrases about the 'principles of right and justice' are always suspicious and generally fallacious." "The rate of wages is determined exclusively by self-interest." "There is no such thing as a 'fair' rate of wages or a 'just' rate of wages."

turning them off as soon as I hear they are laying by money, it may yet be possible to get them for some time to take less than I suppose they should have ; but I cannot hide from myself that the men are beginning to understand the game a little themselves ; and if they should, with the help of those confounded—I beg pardon ! I forgot that one does not print such expressions in *Pall Mall*)—education-mongers, learn to be men, and to look after their own business as I do mine, what am I to do ? Even at present I don't feel easy in telling them that I ought to have more money than they because I know better how to spend it, for even this involves a distant reference to notions of propriety and principle which I would gladly avoid. Will you kindly tell me what is best to be done (or said) ?

I am, Sir, your obliged servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

Easter Monday, 1865.

[From the "*Pall Mall Gazette*," April 21, 1865.]

WORK AND WAGES.

To the Editor of "The Pall Mall Gazette."

Sir : I am not usually unready for controversy, but I dislike it in spring, as I do the east wind (*pace* Mr. Kingsley), and I both regret having given occasion to the only dull leader which has yet¹ appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and the necessity I am involved in of dissecting the same, instead of a violet, on which I was about this morning to begin operations.

But I see, Sir, that you mean fairly, and that you have careful thinkers and writers on your staff. And I will accept your battle, if you will fight with short swords, which is clearly your interest, for such another article would sink the *Gazette* ;

¹ The *Gazette* was at this time of little more than eight weeks' standing. The dull leader was that in the *Gazette* of April 19, entitled "*Masters and Men*," and dealt entirely with Mr. Ruskin's letter on strikes. The "*pace* Mr. Kingsley" alludes, of course, to his *Ode to the North-East Wind*.

and mine, for I have no time to answer speculations on what you writers suppose my opinions may be, "if we understand" them.

You shall understand them utterly, as I already understand yours. I will not call yours "fallacies" *à priori*; you shall not call mine so. I will not tell you of your "unconscious" meanings; you shall not tell me of mine.¹ But I will ask you the plainest questions, and make to you the plainest answers my English will admit of, on one point at a time only, expecting you also to ask or answer as briefly, without divergence or deprecation. And twenty lines will always contain all I would say, at any intervals of time you choose.

For example: I said I must "dissect" your leader, meaning that I should have to take a piece of it, as I would of my flower, and deal with that first; then with its sequences.

I take this sentence then: "He (Mr. R.) seems to think that apart from the question of the powers of the parties, there is some such thing as a just rate of wages. He seems to be under the impression that the wages ought to be proportioned, not to the supply and demand of labor and capital, but 'to the hardship of the work and the time spent in it.'"

Yes, Sir, I am decisively under that impression—as decisively as ever Greek coin was under *its* impression. You will beat me out of all shape, if you can beat me out of this. Will you join issue on it, and are these following statements clear enough for you, either to accept or deny, in as positive terms?—

I. A man should in justice be paid for two hours' work twice as much as for one hour's work, and for *n* hours' work *n* times as much, if the effort be similar and continuous.

II. A man should in justice be paid for difficult or dangerous work proportionately more than for easy and safe work, supposing the other conditions of the work similar.

¹ The leader had begun by speaking of Mr. Ruskin's previous letter as "embodying fallacies, pernicious in the highest degree," and concluded by remarking how "easily and unconsciously he glided into the true result of his principles."

III. (And now look out, for this proposition involves the ultimate principle of all just wages.) If a man does a given quantity of work for me, I am bound in justice to do, or procure to be done, a precisely equal quantity of work for him ; and just trade in labor is the exchange of equivalent quantities of labor of different kinds.

If you pause at this word "equivalent," you shall have definition of it in my next letter. I am sure you will in fairness insert this challenge, whether you accept it or decline.

I am, Sir, your obliged servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.¹

DENMARK HILL, *Thursday, April 20.*

[From "The Pall Mall Gazette," April 26, 1865.]

WORK AND WAGES.

To the Editor of "The Pall Mall Gazette."

SIR : I accept your terms, and reply in the fewest words I can.

I. You "see no injustice in hiring a fly for 2s. 6d. for the first hour and 1s. 6d. for each succeeding one." Nor I either ; so far from it, that I never give a cabman less than a shilling ; which I doubt not is your practice also, and a very proper one. The cabmen make no objection, and you could not have given a neater instance of the proportion of payment to labor which you deny. You pay in the first hour for the various trouble involved in taking the man off his stand, and for a proportion of the time during which he has waited for the chance of your custom. That paid, you hire him by the formula which I state, and you deny.

II. "Danger and difficulty have attractions for some men." They have, and if, under the influence of those attractions, they choose to make you a present of their labor, for love (in

¹ In reply, the Gazette denied "each of the three propositions to be true," on grounds shown in the quotations given in the following letter.

your own terms,¹ "as you give a penny to a beggar"), you may accept the gift as the beggar does, without question of justice. But if they do not choose to give it you, they have a right to higher payment. My guide may perhaps, for love, play at climbing Mont Blanc with me ; if he will not, he has a right to be paid more than for climbing the Breven.

III. "Mr. Ruskin can define justice, or any other word, as he chooses."

It is a gracious permission ; but suppose justice be something more than a word ! When you derived it from *jussum* (falsely, for it is not derived from *jussum*, but from the root of *jungo*), you forgot, or ignored, that the Saxons had also a word for it, by which the English workman still pleads for it ; that the Greeks had a word for it, by which Plato and St. Paul reasoned of it ; and that the Powers of Heaven have, presumably, an idea of it with which it may be well for "our interests" that your definition, as well as mine, should ultimately correspond, since their "definitions" are commonly not by a word but a blow.

But accepting for the nonce your own conception of it as "the fulfilment of a compulsory agreement" ("the wages" you say "which you *force* the men to take, and they can *force* you to pay"), allow me to ask your definition of force, or compulsion. As thus : (*Case 1.*) I agree with my friend that we will pay a visit to Mr. A. at two in the morning. My friend agrees with me that he will hold a pistol to Mr. A.'s head. Under those circumstances, I agree with Mr. A. that I shall remove his plate without expression of objection on his part. Is this agreement, in your sense, "*jussum* ?" (*Case 2.*) Mr. B. goes half through the ice into the canal on a frosty morning. I, on the shore, agree with Mr. B. that I shall have a hundred pounds for throwing him a rope. Is this agreement validly "*jussum* ?"

The first of these cases expresses in small compass the gen-

¹ These "terms" were simply that the Gazette should have the right of determining how much of the proposed controversy was worth its space.

² In the article of April 12.

eral nature of arrangements under compulsory circumstances over which one of the parties has entire control. The second, that of arrangements made under circumstances accidentally compulsory, when the capital is in one party's hands exclusively. For you will observe Mr. B. has no right whatever to the use of my rope : and that capital (though it would probably have been only the final result of my operations with respect to Mr. A.) makes me completely master of the situation with reference to Mr. B.

I am, Sir, your obliged servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.¹

DENMARK HILL, *Saturday, April 22, 1865.*

[From "The Pall Mall Gazette," May 2, 1865.]

WORK AND WAGES.

To the Editor of "The Pall Mall Gazette."

SIR : I have not hastened my reply to your last letter, thinking that your space at present would be otherwise occupied ; having also my own thoughts busied in various directions, such as you may fancy ; yet busied chiefly in a sad wonder, which perhaps you would not fancy. I mourn for Mr. Lincoln,² as man should mourn the fate of man, when it is sudden and supreme. I hate regicide as I do populicide—deeply, if frenzied ; more deeply, if deliberate. But my wonder is in remembering the tone of the English people and press respecting this man during his life ; and in comparing it with their sayings of him in his death. They caricatured and reviled him when his cause was poised in deadly balance—when their praise would have been grateful to him, and their help

¹ For the Gazette's reply to this, see the notes to the following letter.

² President Lincoln was shot while in his private box at Ford's Theatre, Washington, on the night of April 14, 1865, and died early the next morning. His assassin, J. Wilkes Booth, was pursued to Caroline County, Virginia, where he was fired on by the soldiery and killed. A letter was found upon him ascribing his conduct to his devotion to the Southern States.

priceless. They now declare his cause to have been just, when it needs no aid ; and his purposes to have been noble, when all human thoughts of them have become vanity, and will never so much as mix their murmurs in his ears with the sentence of the Tribunal which has summoned him to receive a juster praise and tenderer blame than ours.

I have twice (I see) used the word "just" inadvertently, forgetting that it has no meaning, or may mean (you tell me) quite what we choose ; and that so far as it has a meaning, "the important question is not whether the action is just." Indeed when I read this curious sentence in your reply on Tuesday last, "Justice, as we use it, implies merely the conformity of an action to any rules whatever, good or bad," I had nearly closed the discussion by telling you that there remained no ground on which we could meet, for the English workmen, in whose name I wrote to you, asked, not for conformity with bad rules, but enactment of good ones. But I will not pounce upon these careless sentences, which you are forced to write in all haste, and at all disadvantage, while I have the definitions and results determined through years of quiet labor, lying ready at my hand. You never meant what you wrote (when I said I would not tell you of unconscious meanings, I did not promise not to tell you of unconscious wants of meanings) ; but it is for you to tell *me* what you mean by a bad rule, and what by a good one. Of the law of the Eternal Lawgiver, it is dictated that "the commandment is holy, and just, and good." Not merely that it is a law ; but that it is such and such a law. Are these terms senseless to you ? or do you understand by them only that the observance of that law is generally conducive to our interests ? And if so, what *are* our interests ? Have we ever an interest in *being* something, as well as in getting something ; may not even all getting be at last summed in being ? is it not the uttermost of interest to be just rather than unjust ? Let us leave catching at phrases, and try to look in each other's faces and hearts ; so define our thoughts ; then reason from them. [See below.]¹

¹ The bracketed [*sic*] interpolations are the remarks of the Gazette.

Yet, lest you say I evade you in generalities, here is present answer point by point.

I. "The fare has nothing to do with the labor in preparing the fly for being hired."—Nor, of course, the price of any article with the labor expended in preparing it for being sold? This will be a useful note to the next edition of "*Ricardo*." [The price depends on the relative forces of the buyer and the seller. The price asked by the seller no doubt depends on the labor expended. The price given by the buyer depends on the degree in which he desires to possess the thing sold, which has nothing to do with the labor laid out on it.]

The answer to your instances¹ is that all just price involves an allowance for average necessary, not for unnecessary, labor. The just price of coals at Newcastle does not involve an allowance for their carriage to Newcastle. But the just price of a cab at a stand involves an allowance to the cabman for having stood there. [Why? who is to determine what is necessary?]

II. "This admits the principle of Bargaining." No, Sir; it only admits the principle of Begging. If you like to ask your guide to give you his legs for nothing, or your workman his arms for nothing, or your shopkeeper his goods for nothing, and they consent, for love, or for play—you are doubtless both dignified and fortunate; but there is no question of trade in the matters; only of Alms. [We mean by Alms money or goods given merely from motives of benevolence, and without return. In the case supposed the guide goes one mile to please himself, and ten more for hire, which satisfies him. How does he give Alms? He goes for less money than he otherwise would require, because *he* likes the job, not because his employer likes it. The Alms are thus given by himself to himself.]

III. It is true that "every one can affix to words any sense he chooses." But if I pay for a yard of broadcloth, and the shopman cuts me three-quarters, I shall not put up with my

¹ One of the instances given by the Gazette on this point was that a sovereign made of Californian gold will not buy more wool at Sydney than a sovereign made of Australian gold, although far more labor will have been expended in bringing it to Sydney.

loss more patiently on being informed that Bishop Butler meant by justice something quite different from what Bentham meant by it, or that to give for every yard three-quarters, is the rule of that establishment. [If the word "yard" were as ambiguous as the word "justice," Mr. Ruskin ought to be much obliged to the shopman for defining his sense of it, especially if he gave you full notice before he cut the cloth.]

Further, it is easy to ascertain the uses of words by the best scholars—[Nothing is more difficult. To ascertain what Locke meant by an "idea," or Sir W. Hamilton by the word "inconceivable," is no easy task.]—and well to adopt them, because they are sure to be founded on the feelings of gentlemen.—[Different gentlemen feel and think in very different ways. Though we differ from Mr. Ruskin, we hope he will not deny this.] Thus, when Horace couples his *tenacem propositi* with *justum*, he means to assert that the tenacity is only noble which is justified by uprightness, and shows itself by insufferance of the *jussa* "*prava jubentium*." And although Portia does indeed accept your definition of justice from the lips of Shylock, changing the divine, "who sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not" into the somewhat less divine "who sweareth to his neighbor's hurt and changeth not;" and though she carries out his and your conception of such justice to the uttermost, the result is not, even in Shylock's view of it, "for the interest of both parties."

IV. To your two final questions "exhausting" (by no means, my dear Sir, I assure you) "the points at issue,"¹ I reply in both cases, "No." And to your plaintive "why should they do so?" while, observe, I do not admit it to be a monstrous requirement of men that they should sometimes sacrifice

¹ The Gazette's criticism on the previous letter had concluded thus:

The following questions exhaust the points at issue between Mr. Ruskin and ourselves:

Is every man bound to purchase any service or any goods offered him at a "just" price, he having the money?

If yes, there is an end of private property.

If no, the purchaser must be at liberty to refuse to buy if it suits his interest to do so. Suppose he does refuse, and thereupon the seller

their own interests, I would for the present merely answer that I have never found my own interests seriously compromised by my practice, which is, when I cannot get the fair price of a thing, not to sell it, and when I cannot give the fair price of a thing, not to buy it. The other day, a dealer in want of money offered me a series of Hartz minerals for two-thirds of their value. I knew their value, but did not care to spend the entire sum which would have covered it. I therefore chose forty specimens out of the seventy, and gave the dealer what he asked for the whole.

In the example you give, it is *not* the interest of the guide to take his fifty francs rather than nothing; because all future travellers, though they could afford the hundred, would then say, "You went for fifty; we will give you no more." [Does a man say to a broker, "You sold stock yesterday at 90; I will pay no more to-day"?] And for me, if I am not able to pay my hundred francs, I either forego Mont Blanc, or climb alone; and keep my fifty francs to pay at another time, for a less service, some man who also would have got nothing

offers to lower his price, it being his interest to do so, is the purchaser at liberty to accept that offer?

If yes, the whole principle of bargaining is admitted, and the "justice" of the price becomes immaterial.

If no, each party of the supposition is compelled by justice to sacrifice their interest. Why should they do so?

The following is an example: The "just" price of a guide up Mont Blanc is (suppose) 100 francs. I have only 50 francs to spare. May I without injustice offer the 50 francs to a guide, who would otherwise get nothing, and may he without injustice accept my offer? If not, I lose my excursion, and he loses his opportunity of earning 50 francs. Why should this be?

In addition to the above interpolations, the Gazette appended a note to this letter, in which it declared its definition of justice to be a quotation from memory of Austin's definition adopted by him from Hobbes, and after referring Mr. Ruskin to Austin for the *moral* bearings of the question, concluded by summing up its views, which it doubted if Mr. Ruskin understood, and insisting on the definition of "justice" as conformity with any rule whatever, good or bad, and on that of *good* as "those which promote the general happiness of those whom they affect." (See the next letter.)

otherwise, and who will be honestly paid by what I give him for what I ask of him.

I am, Sir, your obliged servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

SATURDAY, 29th April, 1865.

[From "The Pall Mall Gazette," May 9, 1865.]

WORK AND WAGES.

To the Editor of "The Pall Mall Gazette."

SIR: I am under the impression that we are both getting prosy, or, at all events, that no one will read either my last letter or your comments upon it, in the places in which you have so gracefully introduced them. For which I am sorry, and you, I imagine, are not.

It is true that differences of feeling may exist among gentlemen; yet I think that gentlemen of all countries agree that it is rude to interrupt your opponent while he is speaking; for a futile answer gains no real force by becoming an interjection; and a strong one can abide its time. I will therefore pray you, in future, if you publish my letters at all, to practice towards them so much of old English manners as may yet be found lingering round some old English dinner-tables; where, though we may be compelled by fashion to turn the room into a green-house, and serve everything cold, the *pièces de résistance* are still presented whole, and carved afterwards.

Of course it is open to you to reply that I dislike close argument. Which little flourish being executed, and if you are well breathed—*en garde*, if you please.

I. Your original position was that wages (or price) bear *no* relation to hardship of work. On that I asked you to join issue. You now admit, though with apparent reluctance, that "the price asked by the seller, no doubt, depends on the labor expended."

The price asked by the seller has, I believe, in respectable commercial houses, and respectable shops, very approximate

relation to the price paid by the buyer. I do not know if you are in the habit of asking, from your wine-merchant or tailor, reduction of price on the ground that the sum remitted will be "alms to themselves;" but, having been myself in somewhat intimate connection with a house of business in the City,¹ not dishonorably accounted of during the last forty years, I know enough of their correspondents in every important town in the United Kingdom to be sure that they will bear me witness that the difference between the prices asked and the prices taken was always a very "imaginary" quantity.

But urging this no farther for the present, and marking, for gained ground, only your admission that "the price asked depends on the labor expended," will you farther tell me, whether that dependence is constant, or variable? If constant, under what law; if variable, within what limits?

II. "The alms are thus given by himself to himself." I never said they were not. I said it was a question of alms, not of trade. And if your original leader had only been an exhortation to English workmen to consider every diminution of their pay, in the picturesque though perhaps somewhat dim, religious light of alms paid by themselves to themselves, I never should have troubled you with a letter on the subject. For, singular enough, Sir, this is not one of the passages of your letters, however apparently indefensible, which I care to attack.

So far from it, in my own serious writings I have always maintained that the best work is done, and can only be done, for love.² But the point at issue between us is not whether there *should* be charity, but whether there *can* be trade; not whether men may give away their labor, but whether, if they

¹ That of Messrs. Ruskin, Telford, and Domecq, in which Mr. Ruskin's father, "who began life as a wine-merchant" (Fors Clavigera, Letter x., p. 131, 1871), had been a partner.

² See § 41 of *The Crown of Wild Olive*, p. 50 of the 1873 edition. "None of the best head-work in art, literature, or science, is ever paid for. . . . It is indeed very clear that God means all thoroughly good work and talk to be done for nothing."

do not choose to do so, there is such a thing as a price for it. And my statement, as opposed to yours, is briefly this—that for all labor, there is, under given circumstances, a just price approximately determinable; that every conscious deflection from this price towards zero is either gift on the part of the laborer, or theft on the part of the employer; and that all payment in conscious excess of this price is either theft on the part of the laborer, or gift on that of the employer.

III. If you wish to substitute the word “moral” for “just” in the above statement, I am prepared to allow the substitution; only, as you, not I, introduced this new word, I must pray for your definition of it first, whether remembered from Mr. Hobbes, or original.

IV. I am sorry you doubt my understanding your views; but, in that case, it may be well to ask for a word or two of farther elucidation.

“Justice,” you say, is “conformity with any rule whatever, good or bad.” And “good rules are rules which promote the general happiness of those whom they affect.” And bad rules are (therefore) rules which promote the general misery of those whom they affect? Justice, therefore, may as often as not promote the general misery of those who practice it? Do you intend this?¹

Again: “Good rules are rules which promote the general happiness of those whom they affect.” But, “the greatest happiness of the greatest number is best secured by laying down no rule at all” (as to the price of “labor”).

Do you propose this as a sequitur? for if not, it is merely a *petitio principii*, and a somewhat wide one. Before, therefore, we branch into poetical questions concerning happiness, we will, with your permission, and according to my original stipulation, that we should dispute only of one point at a time, determine the matters already at issue. To which end, also, I leave without reply some parts of your last letter; not with-

¹ “Yes. But, generally speaking, rules are beneficial; hence, generally speaking, justice is a good thing in fact. A state of society might be imagined in which it would be a hideously bad thing.”—(Foot-note answer of the Gazette.)

out a little strain on the *ἔρκος ὀδοντων*, for which I think, Sir, you may give me openly, credit, if not tacitly, thanks.

I am, Sir, your obliged servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, *May 4.*

[From "The Pall Mall Gazette," May 22, 1865.]

WORK AND WAGES.

To the Editor of "The Pall Mall Gazette."

SIR : I have long delayed my reply to your notes on my last letter ; partly being otherwise busy—partly in a pause of surprise and doubt how low in the elements of ethics we were to descend.

Let me, however, first assure you that I heartily concur in your opening remarks, and shall be glad to spare useless and avoid discourteous words. When you said, in your first reply to me, that my letter embodied fallacies which appeared to you pernicious in the highest degree, I also "could not consider this sort of language well judged." When you called one of your own questions an answer, and declared it to be "simple and perfectly conclusive," I thought the flourish might have been spared ; and for having accused you of writing carelessly, I must hope your pardon ; for the discourtesy, in my mind, would have been in imagining you to be writing with care.

For instance, I should hold it discourteous to suppose you unaware of the ordinary distinction between law and equity : yet no consciousness of such a distinction appears in your articles. I should hold it discourteous to doubt your acquaintance with the elementary principles laid down by the great jurists of all nations respecting Divine and Human law ; yet such a doubt forces itself on me if I consider your replies as deliberate. And I should decline to continue the discussion with an opponent who could conceive of justice as (under any circumstances) "an hideously bad thing," if I did not suppose him to have mistaken the hideousness of

justice, in certain phases, to certain persons, for its ultimate nature and power.

There may be question respecting these inaccuracies of thought; there can be none respecting the carelessness of expression which causes the phrases "are" and "ought to be" to alternate in your articles as if they were alike in meaning.

I have permitted this, that I might see the course of your argument in your own terms, but it is now needful that the confusion should cease. That wages *are* determined by supply and demand is no proof that under any circumstances they must be—still less that under all circumstances they ought to be. Permit me, therefore, to know the sense in which you use the word "ought" in your paragraph lettered *b*, page 832¹ (second column), and to ask whether the words "due," "duty," "devoir," and other such, connected in idea with the first and third of the "*præcepta juris*" of Justinian, quoted by Blackstone as a summary of the whole doctrine of law (*honeste vivere,—alterum non lædere,—suumque cuique tribuere*), are without meaning to you except as conditions of agreement?² Whether, in fact, there be, in your view, any *honos*, absolutely; or whether we are to launch out into an historical investigation of the several kinds of happiness enjoyed in lives of rapine, of selfish trade, and of unselfish citizenship, and to decide only upon evidence whether we will live as pirates, as peddlers, or as gentlemen? If so, while I shall be glad to see you undertake, independently, so interesting an inquiry, I must reserve my comments on it until its close.

But if you admit an absolute idea of a "devoir" of one man to another, and of every honorable man to himself, tell me why you dissent from my statement of the terms of that

¹ Viz., "Wages ought to be proportioned to the supply and demand of labor and capital, and not to the hardship of the work and the time spent on it."

² "*Justitia est constans et perpetua voluntas suum cuique tribuendi . . . Jurisprudentia est divinarum atque humanarum rerum notitia, justique injusti scientia.*" The third precept is given above. Justinian, *Inst.* i. 1-3; and see Blackstone, vol. i. section 2, "Of the Nature of Laws in General."

debt in the opening of this discussion. Observe, I asked for no evangelical virtue of returning good for evil: I asked only for the Sinaitic equity of return in good for good, as for Sinaitic equity of return in evil for evil. "Eye for eye," tooth for tooth"—be it so; but will you thus pray according to the *lex talionis* and not according to the *lex gratiæ*? Your debt is on both sides. Does a man take of your life, you take also of his. Shall he give you of his life, and will you not give him also of yours? If this be not your law of duty to him, tell me what other there is, or if you verily believe there is none.

But you ask of such repayment, "Who shall determine how much?" I took no notice of the question, irrelevant when you asked it; but in its broad bearing it is the one imperative question of national economy. Of old, as at bridgefoot of Florence, men regulated their revenge by the law of demand and supply, and asked in measureless anger, "Who shall determine how much?" with economy of blood, such as we know. That "much" is now, with some approximate equity, determined at the judgment-seat, but for the other debt, the debt of love, we have no law but that of the wolf, and the locust, and the "fishes of the sea, which have no ruler over them." The workmen of England—of the world, ask for the return—as of wrath, so of reward by law; and for blood resolutely spent, as for that recklessly shed; for life devoted through its duration, as for that untimely cast away; they require from you to determine, in judgment, the equities of "Human Retribution."

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.¹

May 20, 1865.

¹ See *ante*, second interpolation of the Gazette, on p. 59.

² The discussion was not continued beyond this letter, the Gazette judging any continuance useless, the difference between Mr. Ruskin and themselves being "one of first principles."

[From "The Pall Mall Gazette," May 1, 1867. Reprinted also, with slight alterations, in "Time and Tide." App. vii.]

THE STANDARD OF WAGES.

To the Editor of "*The Pall Mall Gazette*."

SIR: In the course of your yesterday's article on strikes¹ you have very neatly and tersely expressed the primal fallacy of modern political economy—to wit, that the value of any piece of labor cannot be defined; and that "all that can be ascertained is simply whether any man can be got to do it for a certain sum."

Now, sir, the "value" of any piece of labor (*I* should have written "price," not "value," but it is no matter)—that is to say, the quantity of food and air which will enable a man to perform it without eventually losing any of his flesh or nervous energy, is as absolutely fixed a quantity as the weight of powder necessary to carry a given ball a given distance. And within limits varying by exceedingly minor and unimportant circumstances, it is an ascertainable quantity. I told the public this five years ago, and—under pardon of your politico-economical contributor, it is not a sentimental, but a chemical, fact. Let any half-dozen London physicians of recognized standing state in precise terms the quantity and kind of food, and space of lodging, they consider approximately necessary for the healthy life of a laborer in any given manufacture, and the number of hours he may, without shortening his life, work at such business daily, if in such manner he be sustained. Let all masters be bound to give their men

¹ As regards "strikes," it is of interest to note the following amendment proposed by Mr. Ruskin at a special meeting of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science on the subject, held in 1868: "That, in the opinion of this meeting, the interests of workmen and their employers are at present opposed, and can only become identical when all are equally employed in defined labor and recognized duty, and all, from the highest to the lowest, are paid fixed salaries, proportioned to the value of their services and sufficient for their honorable maintenance in the situations of life properly occupied by them."
—Daily Telegraph, July 16, 1868.

a choice between an order for that quantity of food and space of lodging, or the market wages for that specified number of hours of work. Proper laws for the maintenance of families would require further concession; but in the outset, let but this law of wages be established, and if then we have more strikes, you may denounce them without one word of remonstrance either from sense or sensibility.

I am, Sir, with sentiments of great respect,
Your faithful servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, April 30, 1867.

[From "The Pall Mall Gazette," January 24, 1873.]

HOW THE RICH SPEND THEIR MONEY.

To the Editor of "*The Pall Mall Gazette*."

SIR: Here among the hills, I read little, and withstand, sometimes for a fortnight together, even the attractions of my *Pall Mall Gazette*. A friend, however, sent me, two days ago, your article signed W. R. G. on spending of money (January 13),¹ which, as I happened to have over-eaten myself the day before, and taken perhaps a glass too much besides of quite priceless port (Quarles Harris, twenty years in bottle), would have been a great comfort to my mind, showing me that if I

¹ The article, or rather letter, dealt with a paper on "The Labor Movement" by Mr. Goldwin Smith in the *Contemporary Review* of December, 1872, and especially with the following sentences in it: "When did wealth rear such enchanted palaces of luxury as it is rearing in England at the present day? Well do I remember one of those palaces, the most conspicuous object for miles round. Its lord was, I dare say, consuming the income of some hundreds of the poor laboring families around him. The thought that you are spending on yourself annually the income of six hundred laboring families seems to me as much as a man with a heart and a brain can bear." W. R. G.'s letter argued that this "heartless expenditure all goes into the pockets" of the poor families, who are thus benefited by the selfish luxuries of the lord in his palace.

had done some harm to myself, I had at least conferred benefit upon the poor by these excesses, had I not been left in some painful doubt, even at the end of W. R. G.'s most intelligent illustrations, whether I ought not to have exerted myself further in the cause of humanity, and by the use of some cathartic process, such as appears to have been without inconvenience practised by the ancients, enabled myself to eat two dinners instead of one. But I write to you to-day, because if I were a poor man, instead of a (moderately) rich one, I am nearly certain that W. R. G.'s paper would suggest to me a question, which I am sure he will kindly answer in your columns, namely, "These means of living, which this generous and useful gentleman is so fortunately disposed to bestow on me—where does he get them himself?"

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, Jan. 23.

[From "The Pall Mall Gazette," January 29, 1873.]

HOW THE RICH SPEND THEIR MONEY.

To the Editor of "*The Pall Mall Gazette*."

SIR: I am disappointed of my *Gazette* to-day, and shall be grievously busy to-morrow. I think it better, therefore, to follow up my own letter, if you will permit me, with a simple and brief statement of the facts, than to wait till I see your correspondent W. R. G.'s reply, if he has vouchsafed me one.

These are the facts. The laborious poor produce "the means of life" by their labor. Rich persons possess themselves by various expedients of a right to dispense these "means of life," and keeping as much means as they want of it for themselves, and rather more, dispense the rest, usually only in return for more labor from the poor, expended in producing various delights for the rich dispenser. The idea is now gradually entering poor men's minds, that they may as well keep in their own hands the right of distributing "the

means of life" they produce; and employ themselves, so far as they need extra occupation, for their own entertainment or benefit, rather than that of other people. There is something to be said, nevertheless, in favor of the present arrangement, but it cannot be defended in disguise; and it is impossible to do more harm to the cause of order, or the rights of property, than by endeavors, such as that of your correspondent, to revive the absurd and, among all vigorous thinkers, long since exploded notion of the dependence of the poor upon the rich.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

January 28.

J. RUSKIN.

[From "The Pall Mall Gazette," January 31, 1873.]

HOW THE RICH SPEND THEIR MONEY.

To the Editor of "*The Pall Mall Gazette*."

SIR: I have my *Pall Mall Gazette* of the 28th to-day, and must at once, with your permission, solemnly deny the insidiousness of my question, "Where does the rich man get his means of living?" I don't myself see how a more straightforward question could be put! So straightforward indeed that I particularly dislike making a martyr of myself in answering it, as I must this blessed day—a martyr, at least, in the way of witness; for if we rich people don't begin to speak honestly with our tongues, we shall, some day soon, lose them and our heads together, having for some time back, most of us, made false use of the one and none of the other. Well, for the point in question then, as to means of living: the most exemplary manner of answer is simply to state how I got my own, or rather how my father got them for me. He and his partners entered into what your correspondent mellifluously styles "a mutually beneficent partnership,"¹ with certain laborers in Spain. These laborers produced from the earth

¹ W. R. G. had declared that the rich man (or his ancestors) got the money "by co-operation with the poor . . . by, in fact, entering into a mutually beneficent partnership with them, and advancing them their share of the joint profits . . . paying them beforehand, in a word."

annually a certain number of bottles of wine. These productions were sold by my father and his partners, who kept nine-tenths, or thereabouts, of the price themselves, and gave one-tenth, or thereabouts, to the laborers. In which state of mutual beneficence my father and his partners naturally became rich, and the laborers as naturally remained poor. Then my good father gave all his money to me (who never did a stroke of work in my life worth my salt, not to mention my dinner), and so far from finding his money "grow" in my hands, I never try to buy anything with it; but people tell me "money isn't what it was in your father's time, everything is so much dearer." I should be heartily glad to learn from your correspondent as much pecuniary botany as will enable me to set my money a-growing; and in the mean time, as I have thus given a quite indubitable instance of my notions of the way money is made, will he be so kind as to give us, not an heraldic example of the dark ages (though I suspect I know more of the pedigree of money, if he come to that, than he does),¹ but a living example of a rich gentleman who *has* made his money by saving an *equal* portion of profit in some mutually beneficent partnership with his laborers?

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON,
King Charles the Martyr, 1873.

P. S.—I see by Christie & Manson's advertisement that some of the best bits of work of a good laborer I once knew, J. M. W. Turner (the original plates namely of the "*Liber Studiorum*"), are just going to be destroyed by some of his affectionate relations. May I beg your correspondent to explain, for your readers' benefit, this charming case of hereditary accumulation?

¹ W. R. G. had written: "In nine cases out of ten, in the case of acquired wealth, we should probably find, were the pedigree traced fairly and far back enough, that the original difference between the now rich man and the now poor man was, that the latter habitually spent all his earnings, and the former habitually saved a portion of his in order that it might accumulate and fructify."

[Date and place of publication unknown.]

COMMERCIAL MORALITY.¹

MY DEAR SIR: Mr. Johnson's speech in the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, which you favor me by sending, appears to me the most important event that has occurred in relation to the true interests of the country during my lifetime. It begins an era of true civilization. I shall allude to it in the "Fors" of March, and make it the chief subject of the one following (the matter of this being already prepared.² It goes far beyond what I had even hoped to hear admitted—how much less enforced so gravely and weightily in the commercial world.

Believe me, faithfully yours,
J. RUSKIN.

[From "The Monetary and Mining Gazette," November 13, 1875.]

THE DEFINITION OF WEALTH.

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,
9th November, 1875.

To the Editor of "*The Monetary Gazette*."

SIR: I congratulate you with all my mind on the sense, and with all my heart on the courage, of your last Saturday's leading article, which I have just seen.³ You have asserted in it

¹ This letter was received from Mr. Ruskin by a gentleman in Manchester, who had forwarded to him a copy of the speech made by Mr. Richard Johnson (President) at the fifty-fourth annual meeting of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, Feb. 1, 1875. Mr. Johnson's address dealt with the immorality of cheapness, the duties of merchants and manufacturers as public servants, and the nobility of trade as a profession which, when rightly and unselfishly conducted, would yield to no other "in the dignity of its nature and in the employment that it offers to the highest faculties of man."

² In *Fors Clavigera*, (vol. ii., p. 354) Mr. Johnson's speech is named as "the first living words respecting commerce which I have ever known to be spoken in England, in my time," but the discussion of it is postponed.

³ The article was entitled, "What shall we do with it?"

the two vital principles of economy, that society cannot exist by reciprocal pilfering, but must produce wealth if it would have it; and that money must not be lent, but administered by its masters.

You have not yet, however, defined wealth itself, or told the ingenuity of the public what it is to produce.

I have never been able to obtain this definition from economists; ¹ perhaps, under the pressure of facts, they may at last discover some meaning in mine at the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth pages of "*Munera Pulveris*."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. RUSKIN.

[From "*The Socialist*," an Advocate of Love, Truth, Justice, etc., etc. Printed and Published by the Proprietor, W. Freeland, 52 Scotland Street, Sheffield, November, 1877.]

THE PRINCIPLES OF PROPERTY.

10th Oct., 1877.

To the Editor of "*The Socialist*."

SIR: Some Sheffield friend has sent me your fourth number, in the general teaching of which I am thankful to be able to concur without qualification: but let me earnestly beg of you not to confuse the discussion of the principles of Property in Earth, Air, or Water, with the discussion of principles of Property in general.² The things which, being our neighbor's, the Mosaic Law commands us not to covet, are by the most solemn Natural Laws, indeed our neighbor's "property," and any attempts to communize these have always ended, and will always end, in ruin and shame.

Do not attempt to learn from America. An Englishman has brains enough to discover for himself what is good for

¹ At the meeting of the Social Science Association already alluded to (p. 4 note), Mr. Ruskin said that in 1858 he had in vain challenged Mr. Mill to define wealth. The passages referred to in *Munera Pulveris* consist of the statement and explanation of the definition of Value. See *ante*, p. 68, note.

² The references in the letter are to an article on Property entitled, "What should be done?"

England ; and should learn, when he is to be taught anything, from his Fathers, not from his children.

I observe in the first column of your 15th page the assertion by your correspondent of his definition of money as if different from mine. He only weakens my definition with a "certificate of credit" instead of a "promise to pay." What is the use of giving a man "credit"—if you don't engage to pay him?

But I observe that nearly all my readers stop at this more or less metaphysical definition which I give in "Unto this Last," instead of going on to the practical statement of immediate need made in "Munera Pulveris."¹

The promise to find Labor is one which meets general demand ; but the promise to find Bread is the answer needed to immediate demand ; and the only sound bases of National Currency are shown both in "Munera Pulveris," and "Fors Clavigera," to be bread, fuel, and clothing material, of certified quality.

I am Sir, your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.

[From "The Christian Life," December 20, 1879.]

ON CO-OPERATION.²

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE.

DEAR MR. HOLYOAKE: I am not able to write you a pretty letter to-day, being sadly tired, but am very heartily glad to be remembered by you. But it utterly silences me that you

¹ See *Unto this Last*, p. 53, note. "The final and best definition of money is that it is a documentary promise ratified and guaranteed by the nation, to give or find a certain quantity of labor on demand. See also *Munera Pulveris*, §§ 21-25.

² This letter, which was reprinted in the *Coventry Co-operative Record* of January, 1880, was written, some time in August, 1879, to Mr. George Jacob Holyoake, who had sent Mr. Ruskin his *History of Co-operation: its Literature and its Advocates*, 2 vols. London and Manchester, 1875-7.

should waste your time and energy in writing "Histories of Co-operation" anywhere as yet. My dear Sir, you might as well write the history of the yellow spot in an egg—in two volumes. Co-operation is as yet—in any true sense—as impossible as the crystallization of Thames mud.

Ever faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

[From "The Daily News," June 19, 1880.]

ON CO-OPERATION.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,

April 12, 1880.

DEAR MR. HOLYOAKE: I am very glad that you are safe back in England, and am not a little grateful for your kind reference to me while in America, and for your letter about Sheffield Museum.¹ But let me pray for another interpretation of my former letter than mere Utopianism. The one calamity which I perceive or dread for an Englishman is his becoming a rascal, and co-operation among rascals—if it were possible—would bring a curse. Every year sees our workmen more eager to do bad work and rob their customers on the sly. All political movement among such animals I call essentially fermentation and putrefaction—not co-operation.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

¹ The "kind reference to Mr. Ruskin while in America" alludes to a public speech made by Mr. Holyoake during his stay in that country. The "letter about Sheffield Museum," was one in high praise of it, written by Mr. Holyoake to the editor of the Sheffield Independent, in which paper it was printed (March 8, 1880).

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS.

I.—THE MANAGEMENT OF RAILWAYS.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," July 31, 1868.]

IS ENGLAND BIG ENOUGH?

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph."

SIR: You terminate to-day a discussion which seems to have been greatly interesting to your readers, by telling them the "broad fact, that England is no longer big enough for her inhabitants." ¹

Might you not, in the leisure of the recess, open with advantage a discussion likely to be no less interesting, and much more useful—namely, how big England may be made for economical inhabitants, and how little she may be made for wasteful ones? Might you not invite letters on this quite radical and essential question—how money is truly made, and how it is truly lost, not by one person or another, but by the whole nation?

For, practically, people's eyes are so intensely fixed on the immediate operation of money as it changes hands, that they hardly ever reflect on its first origin or final disappearance. They are always considering how to get it from somebody

¹ The discussion had been carried on in a series of letters from a great number of correspondents under the heading of "Marriage or Celibacy," its subject being the pecuniary difficulties in the way of early marriage. The Daily Telegraph of July 30 concluded the discussion with a leading article, in which it characterized the general nature of the correspondence and of which the final words were those quoted by Mr. Ruskin.

else, but never how to get it where that somebody else got it. Also, they very naturally mourn over their loss of it to other people, without reflecting that, if not lost altogether, it may still be of some reflective advantage to them. Whereas, the real national question is not who is losing or gaining money, but who is making and who destroying it. I do not of course mean making money, in the sense of printing notes or finding gold. True money cannot be so made. When an island is too small for its inhabitants, it would not help them to one ounce of bread more to have the entire island turned into one nugget, or to find bank notes growing by its rivulets instead of fern leaves. Neither, by destroying money, do I mean burning notes, or throwing gold away. If I burn a five-pound note, or throw five sovereigns into the sea, I hurt no one but myself ; nay, I benefit others, for everybody with a pound in his pocket is richer by the withdrawal of my competition in the market. But what I want you to make your readers discover is how the *true* money is made that will get them houses and dinners ; and on the other hand how money is truly lost, or so diminished in value that all they can get in a year will not buy them comfortable houses, nor satisfactory dinners.

Surely this is a question which people would like to have clearly answered for them, and it might lead to some important results if the answer were acted upon. The riband-makers at Coventry, starving, invite the ladies of England to wear ribands. The compassionate ladies of England invest themselves in rainbows, and admiring economists declare the nation to be benefited. No one asks where the ladies got the money to spend in rainbows (which is the first question in the business), nor whether the money once so spent will ever return again, or has really faded with the faded ribands and disappeared forever. Again, honest people every day lose quantities of money to dishonest people. But that is merely a change of hands much to be regretted ; but the money is not therefore itself lost ; the dishonest people must spend it at last somehow. A youth at college loses his year's income to a Jew. But the Jew must spend it instead of him. Miser

or not, the day must come when his hands relax. A railroad shareholder loses his money to a director ; but the director must some day spend it instead of him. That is not—at least in the first fact of it—*national* loss. But what the public need to know is, how a final and perfect *loss* of money takes place, so that the whole nation, instead of being rich, shall be getting gradually poor. And then, indeed, if one man in spending his money destroys it, and another in spending it makes more of it, it becomes a grave question in whose hands it is, and whether honest or dishonest people are likely to spend it to the best purpose. Will you permit me, Sir, to lay this not unprofitable subject of inquiry before your readers, while, to the very best purpose, they are investing a little money in sea air ?

Very sincerely yours,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, *July 30.*

[From "The Daily Telegraph," August 6, 1868.]

THE OWNERSHIP OF RAILWAYS.¹

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph."

SIR: The ingenious British public seems to be discovering, to its cost, that the beautiful law of supply and demand does not apply in a pleasant manner to railroad transit. But if they are prepared to submit patiently to the "natural" laws of political economy, what right have they to complain? The railroad belongs to the shareholders ; and has not everybody a right to ask the highest price he can get for his wares? The

¹ In the Daily Telegraph of August 3 appeared eight letters, all of which, under the heading of "Increased Railway Fares," complained of the price of tickets on various lines having been suddenly raised. In the issue of August 4 eighteen letters appeared on the subject, whilst in that of the 5th there were again eight letters. Mr. Ruskin's letter was one of four in the issue of the 6th. It has, it will be seen, no direct connection with that one entitled "Is England Big Enough?" which precedes it in these volumes owing to the allusions to it in one of these railway letters (p. 282).

public have a perfect right to walk, or to make other opposition railroads for themselves, if they please, but not to abuse the shareholders for asking as much as they think they can get.

Will you allow me to put the *real* rights of the matter before them in a few words?

Neither the roads nor the railroads of any nation should belong to any private persons. All means of public transit should be provided at public expense, by public determination where such means are needed, and the public should be its own "shareholder."

Neither road, nor railroad, nor canal should ever pay dividends to anybody. They should pay their working expenses, and no more. All dividends are simply a tax on the traveller and the goods, levied by the person to whom the road or canal belongs, for the right of passing over his property. And this right should at once be purchased by the nation, and the original cost of the roadway—be it of gravel, iron, or adamant—at once defrayed by the nation, and then the whole work of the carriage of persons or goods done for ascertained prices, by salaried officers, as the carriage of letters is done now.

I believe, if the votes of the proprietors of all the railroads in the kingdom were taken *en masse*, it would be found that the majority would gladly receive back their original capital, and cede their right of "revising" prices of railway tickets. And if railway property is a good and wise investment of capital, the public need not shrink from taking the whole off their hands. Let the public take it. (I, for one, who never held a rag of railroad scrip in my life, nor ever willingly travelled behind an engine where a horse could pull me, will most gladly subscribe my proper share for such purchase according to my income.) Then let them examine what lines pay their working expenses and what lines do not, and boldly leave the unpaying embankments to be white over with sheep, like Roman camps, take up the working lines on sound principles, pay their drivers and pointsmen well, keep their carriages clean and in good repair, and make it as wonderful a thing for a train, as for an old mail-coach, to be behind its time;

and the sagacious British public will very soon find its pocket heavier, its heart lighter, and its "passages" pleasanter, than any of the three have been, for many a day.

I am, Sir, always faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, Aug. 5.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," August 10, 1868.]

RAILWAY ECONOMY.

To the Editor of "*The Daily Telegraph*."

SIR: I had not intended again to trespass on your space until I could obtain a general idea of the views of your correspondents on the questions you permitted me to lay before them in my letters of the 31st July and 5th inst.; but I must ask you to allow me to correct an impression likely to be created by your reference to that second letter in your interesting article on the Great Eastern Railway, and to reply briefly to the question of your correspondent "S." on the same subject.¹

¹ The Daily Telegraph of Saturday, August 8, contained an article on the "Increased Railway Fares," in which, commenting on Mr. Ruskin's statement that, given the law of political economy, the railways might ask as much as they could get, it said that Mr. Ruskin mistook "the charge against the companies. While they neglected the 'law of supply and demand,' they suffered: now that they obey that law, they prosper." The latter part of the article dealt with a long letter signed "Fair Play," which was printed in the Daily Telegraph of the same day. "To Mr. Ruskin, who laughs at Political Economy," concluded the article; "and to 'Fair Play,' who thinks that Parliament is at the bottom of all the mischief, we commend a significant fact. An agitation is now on foot in Brighton to have a second railway direct to London. What is the cause of this? Not the Legislature, but the conduct of the Brighton company in raising its fares. That board, by acting in the spirit of a monopoly, has provoked retaliation, and the public now seeks to protect itself by the aid of a competing line."

The letter of the correspondent "S" (also in the Daily Telegraph of August 8) began by asking "what the capitalist is to do with his money, if the Government works the railways on the principle of the Post Office."

You say that I mistook the charge against the railway companies in taunting my unfortunate neighbors at Sydenham¹ with their complaints against the operation of the law of supply and demand, and that it was because the companies neglected that law that they suffered.

But, Sir, the law of supply and demand, as believed in by the British public under the guidance of their economists, is a natural law regulating prices, which it is not at all in their option to "neglect." And it is precisely because I have always declared that there is no such natural law, but that prices can be, and ought to be, regulated by laws of expediency and justice, that political economists have thought I did not understand their science, and you now say I laugh at it. No, Sir, I laughed only at what was clearly no science, but vain endeavor to allege as irresistible natural law, what is indeed a too easily resisted prudential law, rewarding and chastising us according to our obedience. So far from despising true political economy, based on such prudential law, I have for years been chiefly occupied in defending its conclusions, having given this definition of it in 1862. "Political Economy is neither an art nor a science; but a system of conduct and legislature founded on the sciences, including the arts, and impossible except under certain conditions of moral culture."²

And, Sir, nothing could better show the evil of competition as opposed to the equitable regulation of prices than the instance to which you refer your correspondent "Fair Play"—the agitation in Brighton for a second railway. True prudential law would make one railway serve it thoroughly, and fix the fares necessary to pay for thorough service. Competition will make two railways (sinking twice the capital really required); then, if the two companies combine, they can oppress the public as effectively as one could; if they do not,

¹ Several of the letters had been written by residents in the neighborhood of Sydenham.

² Essays on Political Economy (*Fraser's Magazine*, June, 1862, p. 784), now reprinted in *Munera Pulveris*, p. 19, § 1.

they will keep the said public in dirty carriages and in danger of its life, by lowering the working expenses to a minimum in their antagonism.

Next, to the question of your correspondent "S.," "what I expect the capitalist to do with his money," so far as it is asked in good faith I gladly reply, that no one's "expectations" are in this matter of the slightest consequence; but that the moral laws which properly regulate the disposition of revenue, and the physical laws which determine returns proportioned to the wisdom of its employment, are of the greatest consequence; and these may be briefly stated as follows:

1. All capital is justly and rationally invested which supports productive labor (that is to say, labor directly producing or distributing good food, clothes, lodging, or fuel); so long as it renders to the possessor of the capital, and to those whom he employs, only such gain as shall justly remunerate the superintendence and labor given to the business, and maintain both master and operative happily in the positions of life involved by their several functions. And it is highly advantageous for the nation that wise superintendence and honest labor should both be highly rewarded. But all rates of interest or modes of profit or capital, which render possible the rapid accumulation of fortunes, are simply forms of taxation, by individuals, on labor, purchase, or transport; and are highly detrimental to the national interest, being, indeed, no means of national gain, but only the abstraction of small gains from many to form the large gain of one. For, though inequality of fortune is not in itself an evil, but in many respects desirable, it is always an evil when unjustly or stealthily obtained, since the men who desire to make fortunes by large interest are precisely those who will make the worst use of their wealth.

2. Capital sunk in the production of objects which do not immediately support life (as statues, pictures, architecture, books, garden-flowers, and the like) is beneficially sunk if the things thus produced are good of their kind, and honestly desired by the nation for their own sake; but it is sunk ruinously if they are bad of their kind, or desired only for pride or gain. Neither can good art be produced as an "investment."

You cannot build a good cathedral if you only build it that you may charge sixpence for entrance.

3. "Private enterprise" should never be interfered with, but, on the contrary, much encouraged, so long as it is indeed "enterprise" (the exercise of individual ingenuity and audacity in new fields of true labor), and so long as it is indeed "private," paying its way at its own cost, and in no wise harmfully affecting public comforts or interests. But "private enterprise" which poisons its neighborhood, or speculates for individual gain at common risk, is very sharply to be interfered with.

4. All enterprise, constantly and demonstrably profitable on ascertained conditions, should be made public enterprise, under Government administration and security ; and the funds now innocently contributed, and too often far from innocently absorbed, in vain speculation, as noted in your correspondent "Fair Play's" excellent letter,¹ ought to be received by Government, employed by it, not in casting guns, but in growing corn and feeding cattle, and the largest possible legitimate interest returned without risk to these small and variously occupied capitalists, who cannot look after their own money. We should need another kind of Government to do this for us, it is true ; also it is true that we can get it, if we choose ; but we must recognize the duties of governors before we can elect the men fit to perform them.

The benefit of these several modes of right investment of capital would be quickly felt by the nation, not in the increase of isolated or nominal wealth, but in steady lowering of the prices of all the necessities and innocent luxuries of life, and in the disciplined, orderly, and in that degree educational employment of every able-bodied person. For, Sir (again with your pardon), my question "Is England big enough?" was not answered by the sad experience of the artisans of Poplar. Had they been employed in earthbuilding instead of in ship-

¹ "Fair Play's" letter noted the result of investments made in bubble railways, generally by "honest country folks" or "poor clergymen and widows."

building, and heaped the Isle of Dogs itself into half as much space of good land, capable of growing corn instead of mosquitoes, they would actually have made habitable England a little bigger by this time ;¹ and if the first principle of economy in employment were understood among us—namely, always to use whatever vital power of breath and muscle you have got in the country before you use the artificial power of steam and iron for what living arms can do, and never plough by steam while you forward your ploughman to Quebec—those old familiar faces need not yet have looked their last at each other from the deck of the St. Lawrence. But on this subject I will ask your permission to write you in a few days some further words.²

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, Aug. 9.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," December 8, 1865.]

OUR RAILWAY SYSTEM.

To the Editor of "*The Daily Telegraph*."

SIR: Will you allow me a few words with reference to your excellent article of to-day on railroads.³ All you say is true. But of what use is it to tell the public this? Of all the economical stupidities of the public—and they are many—the out-and-out stupidest is underpaying their pointsmen ; but if the said public choose always to leave their lines in the hands of companies—that is to say practically, of engineers and

¹ Alluding to an article in the Daily Telegraph of August 8, headed "East-End Emigrants," which, after remarking that "Mr. Ruskin's question, Is England big enough?" had been just answered rather sadly by a number of Poplar artisans, described the emigration to Quebec on board the St. Lawrence of these inhabitants of the Isle of Dogs, and how, as the ship left the dock, "there were many tears shed, as old, familiar faces looked on each other for the last time."

² Never, it seems, written.

³ An article which, dealing directly with some recent railway accidents, commented especially on the overcrowding of the lines.

lawyers—the money they pay for fares will always go, most of it, into the engineers' and lawyers' pockets. It will be spent in decorating railroad stations with black and blue bricks, and in fighting bills for branch lines. I hear there are more bills for new lines to be brought forward this year than at any previous session. But, Sir, it might do some little good if you were to put it into the engineers' and lawyers' heads that they might for some time to come get as much money for themselves (and a little more safety for the public) by bringing in bills for doubling laterally the present lines as for ramifying them; and if you were also to explain to the shareholders that it would be wiser to spend their capital in preventing accidents attended by costly damages, than in running trains at a loss on opposition branches. It is little business of mine—for I am not a railroad traveller usually more than twice in the year; but I don't like to hear of people's being smashed, even when it is all their fault; so I will ask you merely to reprint this passage from my article on Political Economy in *Fraser's Magazine* for April, 1863, and so leave the matter to your handling:

"Had the money spent in local mistakes and vain private litigation on the railroads of England been laid out, instead, under proper Government restraint, on really useful railroad work, and had no absurd expense been incurred in ornamenting stations, we might already have had—what ultimately it will be found we must have—quadruple rails, two for passengers and two for traffic, on every great line, and we might have been carried in swift safety, and watched and warded by well-paid pointsmen, for half the present fares."¹

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, Dec. 7.

¹ *Essays on Political Economy* (*Fraser's Magazine*, April, 1863, p. 449); *Munera Pulveris*, p. 105, § 128.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," November 30, 1870.]

RAILWAY SAFETY.¹

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph."

SIR: I am very busy, and have not time to write new phrases. Would you mind again reprinting (as you were good enough to do a few days ago²) a sentence from one of the books of mine which everybody said were frantic when I wrote them? You see the date—1863.

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, Nov. 29, 1870.

I have underlined the words I want to be noticed, but, as you see, made no change in a syllable.

Already the Government, not unapproved, carries letters and parcels for us. Larger packages may in time follow—even general merchandise; why not, at last, ourselves? Had the money spent in local mistakes and vain private litigations on the railroads of England been laid out, instead, under proper Government restraint, on really useful railroad work, *and had no absurd expense been incurred in ornamenting stations*, we might already have had—what ultimately it will be found we MUST have—*quadruple rails, two for passengers, and two for traffic, on every great line*; and we might have been carried in swift safety, and watched and warded by well-paid pointamen, for half the present fares.

¹ This letter was elicited by a leading article in the Daily Telegraph of November 29, 1870, upon railway accidents, and the means of their prevention, *à propos* of two recent accidents which had occurred, both on the same day (November 26, 1870) on the London and North-Western Railway.

² In the first letter on the Franco-Prussian War, *ante*, p. 32. (Daily Telegraph, Oct. 7, 1870.)

II.—SERVANTS AND HOUSES.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," September 5, 1865.]

DOMESTIC SERVANTS—MASTERSHIP.

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph."

SIR: You so seldom write nonsense, that you will, I am sure, pardon your friends for telling you when you do. Your article on servants to-day is nonsense. It is just as easy and as difficult now to get good servants as it ever was.¹ You may have them, as you may have pines and peaches, for the growing, or you may even buy them good, if you can persuade the good growers to spare you them off their walls; but you cannot get them by political economy and the law of supply and demand.

There are broadly two ways of making good servants; the first, a sound, wholesome, thoroughgoing slavery—which was the heathen way, and no bad one neither, provided you understand that to make real "slaves" you must make yourself a real "master" (which is not easy). The second is the Christian's way: "whoso delicately bringeth up his servant from a child, shall have him become his son at the last."² And as few people want their servants to become their sons, this is not a way to their liking. So that, neither having courage or self-discipline enough on the one hand to make themselves nobly dominant after the heathen fashion, nor tenderness or justice enough to make themselves nobly protective after the Christian, the present public thinks to manufacture servants bodily out of powder and hay-stuffing—mentally by early instillation of Catechism and other mechanico-religious appliances—and economically, as you helplessly suggest, by the law of supply

¹ The article, after commenting on "the good old times," remarked that it is now "a social fact, that the hardest thing in the world to find is a good servant."

² "He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child, shall have him become his son at the length."—Proverbs xxix. 21.

and demand,' with such results as we all see, and most of us more or less feel, and shall feel daily more and more to our cost and selfish sorrow.

Sir, there is only one way to have good servants ; that is, to be worthy of being well served. All nature and all humanity will serve a good master, and rebel against an ignoble one. And there is no surer test of the quality of a nation than the quality of its servants, for they are their masters' shadows, and distort their faults in a flattened mimicry. A wise nation will have philosophers in its servants' hall ; a knavish nation will have knaves there ; and a kindly nation will have friends there. Only let it be remembered that "kindness" means as with your child, so with your servant, not indulgence, but care.—I am, Sir, seeing that you usually write good sense, and "serve" good causes, your servant to command.

J. RUSKIN. ¹

DENMARK HILL, *Sept. 2.*

[From "The Daily Telegraph," September 7, 1865.]

DOMESTIC SERVANTS—EXPERIENCE.

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph."

SIR : I thank you much for your kind insertion of my letter, and your courteous and graceful answer to it. Others will thank you also ; for your suggestions are indeed much more

¹ "We have really," ran the article, "no remedy to suggest ; the evil seems to be curable only by some general distress which will drive more people into seeking service, and so give employers a greater choice. At present the demand appears to exceed the supply, and servants are careless about losing their places through bad behavior.

² To this letter the Daily Telegraph of September 6 replied by a leader, in which, whilst expressing itself alive to "the sympathy for humanity and appreciation of the dignity which may be made to underlie all human relations," displayed by Mr. Ruskin, it complained that he had only shown "how to cook the cook when we catch her," and not how to catch her. After some detailed remarks on the servants of the day, which seemed "to be more *ad rem* than Mr. Ruskin's eloquent axioms," it concluded by expressing a hope "that he would come down

ad rem than my mere assertions of principle ; but both are necessary. Statements of practical difficulty, and the immediate means of conquering it, are precisely what the editor of a powerful daily journal is able to give ; but he cannot give them justly if he ever allow himself to lose sight of the eternal laws which in their imperative bearings manifest themselves more clearly to the retired student of human life in the phases of its history. My own personal experience—if worth anything—has been simply that wherever I myself knew how a thing should be done, and was resolved to have it done, I could always get subordinates, if made of average good human material, to do it, and that, on the whole, cheerfully, thoroughly, and even affectionately ; and my wonder is usually rather at the quantity of service they are willing to do for me, than at their occasional indolences, or fallings below the standard of seraphic wisdom and conscientiousness. That they *shall* be of average human material, it is, as you wisely point out, every householder's business to make sure. We cannot choose our relations, but we can our servants ; and what sagacity we have and knowledge of human nature cannot be better employed. If your house is to be comfortable, your servants' hearts must be sound, as the timber and stones of its walls ; and there must be discretion in the choice, and time allowed for the "settling" of both. The luxury of having pretty servants must be paid for, like all luxuries, in the penalty of their occasional loss ; but I fancy the best sort of female servant is generally in aspect and general qualities like Sydney Smith's "Bunch,"¹ and a very retainable creature.

from the clouds of theory, and give to a perplexed public a few plain, workable instructions how to get hold of good cooks and maids, coachmen and footmen."—Mr. Ruskin replies to it, and to a large amount of further correspondence on the subject, in the next two letters in the Daily Telegraph.

¹ "A man-servant was too expensive ; so I caught up a little garden-girl, made like a milestone, put a napkin in her hand, christened her Bunch, and made her my butler. The girls taught her to read, Mrs. Sydney to wait, and I undertook her morals ; Bunch became the best butler in the county."—Sydney Smith's *Memoirs* (vol. i. p. 207), where several other anecdotes of Bunch are given.

And for the rest, the dearth of good service, if such there be, may perhaps wholesomely teach us that, if we were all a little more in the habit of serving ourselves in many matters, we should be none the worse or the less happy.

I am, Sir, yours, etc.,

DENMARK HILL, Sept. 6.

J. RUSKIN.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," September 18, 1865.]

DOMESTIC SERVANTS: SONSHIP AND SLAVERY.

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph."

SIR: I have been watching the domestic correspondence in your columns with much interest, and thought of offering you a short analysis of it when you saw good to bring it to a close,¹ and perhaps a note or two of my own experience, being somewhat conceited on the subject just now, because I have a gardener who lets me keep old-fashioned plants in the greenhouse, understands that my cherries are grown for the black-birds, and sees me gather a bunch of my own grapes without making a wry face. But your admirable article of yesterday causes me to abandon my purpose; the more willingly, because among all the letters you have hitherto published there is not one from any head of a household which contains a complaint worth notice. All the masters or mistresses whose letters are thoughtful or well written say they get on well enough with their servants; no part has yet been taken in the discussion by the heads of old families. The servants' letters, hitherto, furnish the best data; but the better class of servants are also silent, and must remain so. Launce, Grumio, or Fairservice² may have something to say for themselves; but you will hear nothing from Old Adam nor from carefu'

¹ In the "admirable article" of September 15, in which the main features of the voluminous correspondence received by the Daily Telegraph on the subject were shortly summed up.

² Fairservice is mentioned in Mr. Ruskin's discussion of parts of the Antiquary in "Fiction, Fair and Foul" (Nineteenth Century, June, 1880) as an "example of innate evil, unaffected by external influences."

Mattie. One proverb from Sancho, if we could get it, would settle the whole business for us ; but his master and he are indeed "no more." I would have walked down to Dulwich to hear what Sam Weller had to say ; but the high-level railway went through Mr. Pickwick's parlor two months ago, and it is of no use writing to Sam, for, as you are well aware, he is no penman. And, indeed, Sir, little good will come of any writing on the matter. "The cat will mew, the dog will have his day." You yourself, excellent as is the greater part of what you have said, and to the point, speak but vainly when you talk of "probing the evil to the bottom." This is no sore that can be probed, no sword nor bullet wound. This is a plague spot. Small or great, it is in the significance of it, not in the depth, that you have to measure it. It is essentially bottomless, cancerous ; a putrescence through the constitution of the people is indicated by this galled place. Because I know this thoroughly, I say so little, and that little, as your correspondents think, who know nothing of me, and as you say, who might have known more of me, unpractically. Pardon me, I am no seller of plasters, nor of ounces of civet. The patient's sickness is his own fault, and only years of discipline will work it out of him. That is the only really "practical" saying that can be uttered to him. The relation of master and servant involves every other—touches every condition of moral health through the State. Put that right, and you put all right ; but you will find it can only come ultimately, not primarily, right ; you cannot begin with it. Some of the evidence you have got together is valuable, many pieces of partial advice very good. You need hardly, I think, unless you wanted a type of British logic, have printed a letter in which the writer accused (or would have accused, if he had possessed Latinity enough) all London servants of being thieves because he had known one robbery to have been committed by a nice-looking girl.¹ But on the whole there is

¹ This refers to a letter in which the writer gave an account of a robbery by a housemaid, and, drawing from her conduct the moral "put not your trust in London servants," concluded by signing his letter, "Ab hoc disce omnes."

much common-sense in the letters ; the singular point in them all, to my mind, being the inapprehension of the breadth and connection of the question, and the general resistance to, and stubborn rejection of, the abstract ideas of sonship and slavery, which include whatever is possible in wise treatment of servants. It is very strange to see that, while everybody shrinks at abstract suggestions of there being possible error in a book of Scripture,¹ your sensible English housewife fearlessly rejects Solomon's opinion when it runs slightly counter to her own, and that not one of your many correspondents seems ever to have read the Epistle to Philemon. It is no less strange that while most English boys of ordinary position hammer through their Horace at one or other time of their school life, no word of his wit or his teaching seems to remain by them : for all the good they get out of them, the Satires need never have been written. The Roman gentleman's account of his childhood and of his domestic life possesses no charm for them : and even men of education would sometimes start to be reminded that his "*noctes cœnæque Deum !*" meant supping with his merry slaves on beans and bacon. Will you allow me, on this general question of liberty and slavery, to refer your correspondents to a paper of mine touching closely upon it, the leader in the *Art-Journal* for July last ? and to ask them also to meditate a little over the two beautiful epitaphs on Epictetus and Zosima, quoted in the last paper of the *Idler* ?²

¹The last volume of Bishop Colenso's work on "The Pentateuch and Book of Joshua critically examined" was published in the April of the year in which these letters were written, and his deposition by the Bishop of Capetown had but recently been reversed by the Privy Council. It is to the discussion aroused by his book that Mr. Ruskin indirectly refers.

²The leader in the *Art-Journal* is Chapter vi. of *The Cestus of Aglaia*, where "the infinite follies of modern thought, centred in the notion that liberty is good for a man, irrespectively of the use he is likely to make of it," are discussed at some length. The epitaphs quoted are not in the *Idler* itself, but in the *Essay on Epitaphs* printed at the end of some editions of it.

"I, Epictetus, was a slave ; and sick in body, and wretched in poverty ; and beloved by the gods."

"Zosima, who while she lived was a slave only in her body, has now found deliverance for that also."

How might we, over many an "independent" Englishman, reverse this last legend, and write—

"This man, who while he lived was free only in his body, has now found captivity for that also."

I will not pass without notice—for it bears also on wide interests—your correspondent's question, how my principles differ from the ordinary economist's view of supply and demand.¹ Simply in that the economy I have taught, in opposition to the popular view, is the science which not merely ascertains the relations of existing demand and supply, but determines what *ought* to be demanded and what *can* be supplied. A child demands the moon, and, the supply not being in this case equal to the demand, is wisely accommodated with a rattle ; a footpad demands your purse, and is supplied according to the less or more rational economy of the State, with that or a halter ; a foolish nation, not able to get into its head that free trade does indeed mean the removal of taxation from its imports, but not of supervision from them, demands unlimited foreign beef, and is supplied with the cattle murrain and the like. There may be all manner of demands, all manner of supplies. The true political economist regulates these ; the false political economist leaves them to be regulated by (not Divine) Providence. For, indeed, the largest final demand anywhere reported of, is that of hell ; and the supply of it (by the broad-gauge line) would be very nearly equal to the demand at this day, unless there were here and there a swineherd or two who could keep his pigs out of sight of the lake.

Thus in this business of servants everything depends on what sort of servant you at heart wish for or "demand." If

¹ This refers to a letter signed "W. B." in the Daily Telegraph of September 12.

for nurses you want Charlotte Winsors, they are to be had for money ; but by no means for money, such as that German girl who, the other day, on her own scarce-floating fragment of wreck, saved the abandoned child of another woman, keeping it alive by the moisture from her lips.¹ What kind of servant do you want? It is a momentous question for you yourself—for the nation itself. Are we to be a nation of shop-keepers, wanting only shop-boys ; or of manufacturers, wanting only hands ; or are there to be knights among us, who will need squires—captains among us, needing crews? Will you have clansmen for your candlesticks, or silver plate? Myrmidons at your tents, ant-born, or only a mob on the Gillies' Hill? Are you resolved that you will never have any but your inferiors to serve you, or shall Enid ever lay your trencher with tender little thumb, and Cinderella sweep your hearth, and be cherished there? It *might* come to that in time, and plate and hearth be the brighter ; but if your servants are to be held your inferiors, at least be sure they *are* so, and that you are indeed wiser, and better-tempered, and more useful than they. Determine what their education ought to be, and organize proper servants' schools, and there give it them. So they will be fit for their position, and will do honor to it, and stay in it : let the masters be as sure they do honor to theirs, and are as willing to stay in that. Remember that every people which gives itself to the pursuit of riches, invariably, and of necessity, gets the scum uppermost in time, and is set by the genii, like the ugly bridegroom in the Arabian Nights, at its own door with its heels in the air, showing its shoe-soles instead of a Face. And the reversal is a serious matter, if reversal be even possible, and it comes right end uppermost again, instead of to conclusive Wrong end.

I suppose I am getting unpractical again. Well, here is one practical morsel, and I have done. One or two of your correspondents have spoken of the facilities of servants for

¹ Charlotte Winsor was at this time under sentence of death for the murder of a child, which had been entrusted to her charge. I have been unable to verify the anecdote of her heroic anti-type.

leaving their places. Drive that nail home, Sir. A large stray branch of the difficulty lies there. Many and many a time I have heard Mr. Carlyle speak of this, and too often I have felt it myself as one of the evils closely accompanying the fever of modern change in the habits and hopes of life. My own architectural work drives me to think of it continually. Round every railroad station, out of the once quiet fields, there bursts up first a blotch of brick-fields, and then of ghastly houses, washed over with slime into miserable fineries of cornice and portico. A gentleman would hew for himself a log hut, and thresh for himself a straw bed, before he would live in such; but the builders count safely on tenants—people who know no quietness nor simplicity of pleasure, who care only for the stucco, and lodge only in the portico, of human life—understanding not so much as the name of House or House-Hold. They and their servants are always “bettering themselves” divergently.

You will do good service at least in teaching any of these who will listen to you, that if they can once make up their minds to a fixed state of life, and a fixed income, and a fixed expenditure—if they can by any means get their servants to stay long enough with them to fit into their places and know the run of the furrows—then something like service and mastership, and fulfilment of understood and reciprocal duty, may become possible; no otherwise. I leave this matter to your better handling, and will trespass on your patience no more. Only, as I think you will get into some disgrace with your lady correspondents for your ungallant conclusions respecting them¹—which I confess surprised me a little, though I might have been prepared for it if I had remembered what order the husband even of so good a housewife as Penelope was obliged

¹ The “admirable article” which had closed the discussion advised mistresses to resemble those of the good old days, and to deserve good servants, if they wished to secure them. It, somewhat inconsistently with the previous articles, declared that the days of good service would not be found altogether past, if it was remembered that by derivation “domestic” meant “homelike,” and “family” one’s servants, not one’s children.

to take with some of her female servants after prolonged absence,—I have translated a short passage of Xenophon's *Economics*¹ for you, which may make your peace if you will print it. I wish the whole book were well translated; meantime, your lady readers must be told that this part of a Greek country gentleman's account of the conversation he had with his young wife (a girl of fifteen only), a little while after their marriage, when "she had got used to him," and was not frightened at being spoken gravely to. First they pray together; and then they have a long happy talk, of which this is the close:

"But there is one of the duties belonging to you," I said, "which perhaps will be more painful to you than any other, namely, the care of your servants when they are ill." "Nay," answered my wife, "that will be the most pleasing of all my duties to me, if only my servants will be grateful when I minister rightly to them, and will love me better." And I, pleased with her answer, said, "Indeed, lady, it is in some such way as this that the queen of the hive is so regarded by her bees, that, if she leave the hive, none will quit her, but all will follow her." Then she answered, "I should wonder if this office of leader were not yours rather than mine, for truly my care and distribution of things would be but a jest were it not for your inbringing." "Yes," I said, "but what a jest would my inbringing be if there were no one to take care of what I

¹ See *The Economist of Xenophon*, since (1875) translated and published in the "*Bibliotheca Pastorum*," edited by Mr. Ruskin (vol. i. p. 50, chap. vii. § 37-43). Mr. Ruskin in his preface to the volume speaks of the book as containing "first, a faultless definition of wealth" . . . "secondly, the most perfect ideal of kingly character and kingly government given in literature." . . . and "thirdly, the ideal of domestic life." It may be interesting to note an earlier and quaint estimate of the work, given in "*Xenophon's Treatise of Householde*—imprinted at London, in Fleet Street, by T. Berthelet, 1534," where the dialogue is described as "ryght counnyngly translated out of the Greke tongue into Englysshe by Gentian Hervet at the desyre of Mayster Geffrey Pole, whiche boke for the welthe of this realme I deme very profitable to be red."

brought. Do not you know how those are pitied of whom it is fabled that they have always to pour water into a pierced vessel?" "Yes; and they *are* unhappy, if in truth they do it," said she. "Then also," I said, "remember your other personal cares. Will all be sweet to you when, taking one of your maidens who knows not how to spin, you teach her, and make her twice the girl she was; or one who has no method nor habit of direction, and you teach her how to manage a house, and make her faithful and mistress-like and every way worthy, and when you have the power of benefiting those who are orderly and useful in the house, and of punishing any one who is manifestly disposed to evil? But what will be sweetest of all, if it may come to pass, will be that you should show yourself better even than *me*, and so make me your servant also: so that you need not fear in advancing age to be less honored in my house; but may have sure hope that in becoming old, by how much more you have become also a noble fellow-worker with me, and joint guardian of our children's possessions, by so much shall you be more honored in my household. For what is lovely and good increases for all men—not through fairness of the body, but through strength and virtue in things pertaining to life. And this is what I remember chiefly of what we said in our first talk together."

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, *Sept.* 16.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," October 17, 1865.]

MODERN HOUSES.

To the Editor of "*The Daily Telegraph*."

SIR: I trust you will hold the very able and interesting letter from "W. H. W.,"¹ which you publish to-day, excuse

¹ The letter of "W. H. W." commenced by stating that the writer had "waited till the discussion . . . about domestic servants was brought to a close to make a few remarks on a subject touched on in Mr. Ruskin's last letter—domestic architecture." It then gave a "graphic description" of "W. H. W.'s" own modern villa and its miseries, and concluded by asking Mr. Ruskin if nothing could be done!

enough for my briefly trespassing on your space once more. Indeed, it has been a discomfort to me that I have not yet asked the pardon of your correspondent, "A Tenant, not at will" (Sept. 21),¹ for the apparent discourtesy of thought of which he accused me. He need not have done so: for although I said "a gentleman would hew for himself a log hut" rather than live in modern houses, I never said he would rather abandon his family and his business than live in them; and your correspondent himself, in his previously written letter, had used precisely the same words. And he must not suspect that I intend to be ironical in saying that the prolonged coincidence of thought and word in the two letters well deserves the notice of your readers, in the proof it gives of the strength and truth of the impression on both minds. "W. H. W.'s" graphic description of his house is also sorrowfully faithful to the facts of daily experience; and I doubt not that you will soon have other communications of the same tenor, and all too true.

I made no attempt to answer "A Tenant, not at will," because the subject is much too wide for any detailed treatment in a letter; and you do not care for generalizations of mine. But I am sure your two correspondents, and the large class of sufferers which they represent, would be very sincerely grateful for some generalizations of yours on this matter. For, Sir, surely of all questions for the political economist, this of put-

¹ "A Tenant, not at will" had written to point out the coincidence that he had, before the publication of Mr. Ruskin's third letter, himself begun a letter to the Daily Telegraph on the subject of houses, in parts of which, strangely enough, he had used expressions very similar to those of Mr. Ruskin (see *ante*, pp. 144-8). He had described his modern suburban villa as "one of an ugly mass of blossoms lately burst forth from the parent trunk—a brickfield;" and declared that if it were not that people would think him mad, he "would infinitely rather live in a log hut of his own building" than in a builder's villa. He concluded by saying that all the houses were the same, and that therefore, until Mr. Ruskin could point out honest-built dwellings neglected while the "villas" were all let, it was not quite fair of him to assume that "suburban villains" utterly wanted the true instinct of gentlemen which would lead to the preference of log huts to plaster palaces.

ting good houses over people's heads is the closest and simplest. The first question in all economy, practically as well as etymologically, must be this, of lodging. The "Eco" must come before the "Nomy." You must have a house before you can put anything into it; and preparatorily to laying up treasure, at the least dig a hole for it. Well, Sir, here, as it seems to my poor thinking, is a beautiful and simple problem for you to illustrate the law of demand and supply upon. Here you have a considerable body of very deserving persons "demanding" a good and cheap article in the way of a house. Will you or any of your politico-economic correspondents explain to them and to me the Divinely Providential law by which, in due course, the supply of such cannot but be brought about for them?

There is another column in your impression of to-day to which, also, I would ask leave to direct your readers' attention—the 4th of the 3d page; and especially, at the bottom of it, Dr. Whitmore's account of Crawford Place,¹ and his following statement that it is "a kind of property constituting a most profitable investment;" and I do so in the hope that you will expand your interpretation of the laws of political economy so far as to teach us how, by their beneficent and inevitable operation, good houses must finally be provided for the classes who live in Crawford Place, and such other places; and, without necessity of eviction, also for the colliers of Cramlington (*vide* 2d column of the same 3d page).² I have,

¹ The account consisted of a report presented by Dr. Whitmore, as Metropolitan Officer of Health to the district, to the Marylebone Representative Council. Describing the miseries of Crawford Place, which was left in an untenable condition, while the landlords still got high rents for it, he added that "property of this description, let out in separate rooms to weekly tenants, constitutes a most profitable investment," according to the degree of flinty determination exercised in collecting the rents.

² This alludes to an account of the position of the Cramlington colliers after seventeen days of strike. The masters attempted to evict the pitmen from their houses, an attempt which the pitmen met partly by serious riot and resistance, and partly by destroying the houses they were forced to leave.

indeed, my own notions on the subject, but I do not trouble you with them, for they are unfortunately based on that wild notion of there being a "just" price for all things, which you say in your article of Oct. 10, on the Sheffield strikes, "has no existence but in the minds of theorists."¹ The *Pall Mall Gazette*, with which journal I have already held some discussion on the subject, eagerly quoted your authority on its side, in its impression of the same evening; nor do I care to pursue the debate until I can inform you of the continuous result of some direct results which I am making on my Utopian principles. I have bought a little bit of property of the Crawford Place description, and mending it somewhat according to my notions, I make my tenants pay me what I hold to be a "just" price for the lodging provided. That lodging I partly look after, partly teach the tenants to look after for themselves; and I look a little after them, as well as after the rents. I do not mean to make a highly profitable investment of their poor little rooms; but I do mean to sell a good article, in the way of house room, at a fair price; and hitherto my customers are satisfied, and so am I.²

In the mean time, being entirely busy in other directions, I must leave the discussion, if it is to proceed at all, wholly between you and your readers. I will write no word more till I see what they all have got to say, and until you yourself have explained to me, in its anticipated results, the working—as regards the keeping out of winter and rough weather—of the principles of Non-iquity (I presume that is the proper politico-economic form for the old and exploded word Iniquity); and so I remain, Sir, yours, etc.,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, Oct. 16.

¹ "Such a thing as a 'just price,' either for labor or for any other commodity, has, with all submission to Mr. Ruskin, no existence save in the minds of theorists." (Daily Telegraph, Oct. 10, quoted by the *Pall Mall* in its "Epitome of the Morning Papers" on the same day.) The discussion with the *Gazette* consisted of the "Work and Wages" letters (see *ante*, pp. 55 *seqq.*).

² See Fors Clavigera, 1877, Letter 78, Notes and Correspondence, p. 54.

III.—ROMAN INUNDATIONS.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," January 12, 1871. Also reprinted in "Fors Clavigera," 1873, Letter xxxiii., vol. ii., p. 75.]

A KING'S FIRST DUTY.

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph."

SIR: May I ask you to add to your article on the inundation of the Tiber some momentary invitation to your readers to think with Horace rather than to smile with him?

In the briefest and proudest words he wrote of himself he thought of his native land chiefly as divided into the two districts of violent and scanty waters:

"Dicar, qua violens obstrepit Aufidus,
Et qua, pauper aquæ, Daunus agrestium
Regnavit populorum."¹

Now the anger and power of that "tauriformis Aufidus" is precisely because "regna Dauni præfluit"—because it flows past the poor kingdoms which it should enrich. Stay it there, and it is treasure instead of ruin. And so also with Tiber and Eridanus. They are so much gold, at their sources—they are so much death, if they once break down unbridled into the plains.

At the end of your report of the events of the inundation, it is said that the King of Italy expressed "an earnest desire to do something, as far as science and industry could effect it, to prevent or mitigate inundations for the future."

Now science and industry can do, not "something," but everything, and not merely to mitigate inundations—and,

¹ On December 27 there was a disastrous inundation of the Tiber, and a great part of Rome was flooded. The Daily Telegraph in its leading article of Jan. 10, 1871, on the subject, began by quoting from the "very neatest," "sparkling," "light-hearted" ode of Horace, "Jam satis terris nivis" (Horace, Odes, i. 2). The quotations in the letter are from Odes iv. 14, 25, and from the celebrated ode beginning "Exegi monumentum ære perennius" (Odes, iii. 30).

deadliest of inundations, because perpetual, maremmas—but to change them into national banks instead of debts.

The first thing the King of any country has to do is to manage the streams of it.

If he can manage the streams, he can also the people ; for the people also form alternately torrent and maremma, in pestilential fury or pestilential idleness. They also will change into living streams of men, if their Kings literally “lead them forth beside the waters of comfort.” Half the money lost by this inundation of Tiber, spent rightly on the hill-sides last summer, would have changed every wave of it into so much fruit and foliage in spring where now there will be only burning rock. And the men who have been killed within the last two months, and whose work and the money spent in doing it, have filled Europe with misery which fifty years will not efface,¹ had they been set at the same cost to do good instead of evil, and to save life instead of destroying it, might, by this 10th of January, 1871, have embanked every dangerous stream at the roots of the Rhine, the Rhone, and the Po, and left to Germany, to France, and to Italy an inheritance of blessing for centuries to come—they and their families living all the while in brightest happiness and peace. And now! Let the Red Prince look to it ; red inundation bears also its fruit in time.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Jan. 10.

JOHN RUSKIN.

[From “The Pall Mall Gazette,” January 19, 1871.]

A NATION'S DEFENCES.

To the Editor of “The Pall Mall Gazette.”

SIR : The letter to which you do me the honor to refer, in your yesterday's article on the Tiber, entered into no detail,²

¹ This letter, it will be noticed, was written during the bombardment of Paris in the Franco-Prussian war.

² The Pall Mall Gazette had quoted part of the preceding letter, and had spoken of “a remedy which Mr. Ruskin himself appears to contemplate, though he describes it in rather a nebulous manner.”

because I had already laid the plans spoken of before the Royal Institution in my lecture there last February ;¹ in which my principal object was to state the causes of the incalculably destructive inundations of the Rhone, Toccia, and Ticino, in 1868 ; and to point out that no mountain river ever was or can be successfully embanked in the valleys ; but that the rainfall must be arrested on the high and softly rounded hill surfaces, before it reaches any ravine in which its force can be concentrated. Every mountain farm ought to have a dike about two feet high—with a small ditch within it—carried at intervals in regular, scarcely perceptible incline across its fields ; with discharge into a reservoir large enough to contain a week's maximum rainfall on the area of that farm in the stormiest weather—the higher uncultivated land being guarded over larger spaces with bolder embankments. No drop of water that had once touched hill ground ought ever to reach the plains till it was wanted there : and the maintenance of the bank and reservoir, once built, on any farm, would not cost more than the keeping up of its cattle-sheds against chance of whirlwind and snow.

The first construction of the work would be costly enough ; and, say the Economists, "would not pay." I never heard of any National Defences that did ! Presumably, we shall have to pay more income-tax next year, without hope of any dividend on the disbursement. Nay—you must usually wait a

¹ "A Talk respecting Verona and its Rivers," February 4, 1870. (See Proceedings of the Royal Institution, vol. p. 55. The report of the lecture was also printed by the Institution in a separate form ; pp. 7.) The lecture concluded thus : "Further, without in the least urging my plans impatiently on any one else, I know thoroughly that this [the protection against inundations] which I have said *should* be done, *can* be done, for the Italian rivers, and that no method of employment of our idle able-bodied laborers would be in the end more remunerative, or in the beginnings of it more healthful and every way beneficial than, with the concurrence of the Italian and Swiss governments, setting them to redeem the valleys of the Ticino and the Rhone. And I pray you to think of this ; for I tell you truly—you who care for Italy—that both her passions and her mountain streams are noble ; but that her happiness depends not on the liberty, but the right government of both."

year or two before you get paid for any great work, even when the gain is secure. The fortifications of Paris did not pay, till very lately ; they are doubtless returning cent. per cent. now, since the kind of rain falls heavy within them which they were meant to catch. Our experimental embankments against (perhaps too economically cheap) shot at Shoeburyness are property which we can only safely "realize" under similarly favorable conditions. But my low embankments would not depend for their utility on the advent of a hypothetical foe, but would have to contend with an instant and inevitable one ; yet with one who is only an adversary if unresisted ; who, resisted, becomes a faithful friend—a lavish benefactor.

Give me the old bayonets in the Tower, if I can't have anything so good as spades ; and a few regiments of "volunteers" with good Engineer officers over them, and, in three year's time, an Inundation of Tiber, at least, shall be Impossible.

I am, Sir, your faithful servant.

JOHN RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, Jan. 19, 1871.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," February 4, 1871.]

THE WATERS OF COMFORT.

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph."

SIR : I did not see your impression of yesterday until too late to reply to the question of your correspondent in Rome ;¹ and I am hurried to-day ; but will send you to-morrow a precise statement of what I believe can be done in the Italian uplands. The simplest and surest beginning would be the purchase, either by the Government or by a small company formed in Rome, of a few plots of highland in the Apennines,

¹ The correspondent of the Daily Telegraph had written that Mr. Ruskin's letter of January 10 had been translated into Italian and had set people thinking, and he asked Mr. Ruskin to write and state the case once more.

now barren for want of water, and valueless ; and the showing what could be made of them by terraced irrigation such as English officers have already introduced in many parts of India. The Agricultural College at Cirencester ought, I think, to be able to send out two or three superintendents, who would direct rightly the first processes of cultivation, choosing for purchase good soil in good exposures, and which would need only irrigation to become fruitful ; and by next summer, if not by the end of this, there would be growing food for men and cattle where now there is only hot dust ; and I do not think there would be much further question "where the money was to come from." The real question is only, "Will you *pay* your money in advance for what is actually new land added to the kingdom of living Italy ?" or "Will you pay it under call from the Tiber every ten or twenty years as the price of the work done by the river for your destruction ?"

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.

OXFORD, *Feb.* 3.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," February 7, 1871.]

THE STREAMS OF ITALY.¹

To the Editor of "*The Daily Telegraph*."

SIR: In this month, just thirty years ago, I was at Naples, and the days were nearly as dark as these, but with clouds and rain, not fog. The streets leading down from St. Elmo became beds of torrents. A story went about—true or not I do not know, but credible enough—of a child's having been carried off by the gutter and drowned at the bottom of the hill. At last came indeed what, in those simple times, people thought a serious loss of life. A heavy storm burst one night above a village on the flank of the Monte St. Angelo, a mile or two south of Pompeii. The limestones slope steeply there under about three feet of block earth. The water peeled a

¹ See the date of letter on a landslip near Giagnano (vol i. p. 197.)

piece of the rock of its earth, as one would peel an orange, and brought down three or four acres of the good soil in a heap on the village at midnight, driving in the upper walls, and briefly burying some fourteen or fifteen people in their sleep—and, as I say, in those times there was some talk even about fourteen or fifteen. But the same kind of thing takes place, of course, more or less, among the hills in almost every violent storm, generally with the double result of ruining more ground below than is removed from the rocks above; for the frantic streams mostly finish their work with a heap of gravel and blocks of stone like that which came down the ravine below the glacier of Greppond about ten years ago, and destroyed, for at least fifty years to come, some of quite the best land in Chamouni.

In slower, but ceaseless process of ruin, the Po, Arno, and Tiber steadily remove the soil from the hills, and carry it down to their deltas. The Venetians have contended now for a thousand years in vain even with the Brenta and the minor streams that enter their lagoons, and have only kept their canals clear by turning the river south to Malamocco with embankments which have unhealthily checked the drainage of all the flat country about Padua.

And this constant mischief takes place, be it observed, irrespective of inundation. All that Florence, Pisa, and Rome have suffered and suffer periodically from floods is so much mischief added to that of increasing marenmmas, spoiled harbours, and lost mountain-ground.

There is yet one further evil. The snow on the bared rock slips lower and melts faster; snows which in mossy or grass ground would have lain long, and furnished steadily flowing streams far on into summer, fall or melt from the bare rock in avalanche and flood, and spend in desolation in a few days what would have been nourishment for half the year. And against all this there are no remedies possible in any sudden or external action. It is the law of the Heaven which sends flood and food, that national prosperity can only be achieved by national forethought and unity of purpose.

In the year 1858 I was staying the greater part of the sum-

mer at Bellinzona, during a draught as harmful as the storms of ten years later. The Ticino sank into a green rivulet ; and not having seen the right way to deal with the matter, I had many a talk with the parroco of a little church whose tower I was drawing, as to the possibility of setting his peasants to work to repair the embankment while the river was low. But the good old priest said, sorrowfully, the peasants were too jealous of each other, that no one would build anything or protect his own ground for fear his work would also benefit his neighbors.

But the people of Bellinzona are Swiss, not Italians. I believe the Roman and Sienese races, in different ways, possess qualities of strength and gentleness far more precious than the sunshine and rain upon their mountains, and, hitherto, as cruelly lost. It is in them that all the real power of Italy still lives ; it is only by them, and by what care, and providence, and accordant good-will ever be found in them, that the work is to be done, not by money ; though, if money were all that is needed, do we in England owe so little to Italy of delight that we cannot so much as lend her spades and pick-axes at her need ? Would she trust us ? Would her government let us send over some engineer officers and a few sappers and miners, and bear, for a time, with an English instead of a French " occupation " of her barrenest hills ?

But she does not need us. Good engineers she has, and has had many since Leonardo designed the canals of Lombardy. Agriculturists she has had, I think, among her gentlemen a little before there were gentlemen farmers in England ; something she has told us of agriculture, also, pleasantly by the reeds of Mincio and among the apple-blossoms wet with Arno. Her streams have learned obedience before now : Fonte Branda and the Fountain of Joy flow at Sienna still ; the rivulets that make green the slopes of Casentino may yet satisfy true men's thirst. " Where is the money to come from ? " Let Italy keep her souls pure, and she will not need to alloy her florins. The only question for her is whether still the mossy rock and the " rivus aquæ " are " in rotis " or rather the race-course and the boulevard—the curses of England and of France.

At all events, if any one of the Princes of Rome will lead, help enough will follow to set the work on foot, and show the peasants, in some narrow district, what can be done. Take any arid piece of Apennine towards the sources of the Tiber ; let the drainage be carried along the hill-sides away from the existing water-courses ; let cisterns, as of old in Palestine, and larger reservoirs, such as we now can build, be established at every point convenient for arrest of the streams ; let channels of regulated flow be established from these over the tracts that are driest in summer ; let ramparts be carried, not along the river banks, but round the heads of the ravines, throwing the water aside into lateral canals ; then terrace and support the looser soil on all the steeper slopes ; and the entire mountain side may be made one garden of orange and vine and olive beneath ; and a wide blossoming orchard above ; and a green highest pasture for cattle, and flowers for bees—up to the edge of the snows of spring.

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

OXFORD, Feb. 3.

[From the "Pall Mall Gazette," December 28, 1871.]

THE STREETS OF LONDON.

To the Editor of the "Pall Mall Gazette."

SIR : I have been every day on the point of writing to you since your notice, on the 18th,¹ of the dirty state of the London streets, to ask whether any of your readers would care to know how such matters are managed in my neighbourhood. I was obliged, a few years ago, for the benefit of my health, to take a small house in one of the country towns of Utopia ; and though I was at first disappointed in the climate, which indeed is no better than our own (except that there is no foul marsh air), I found my cheerfulness and ability for work greatly increased by the mere power of getting exercise pleas-

¹ Quite unimportant. It simply complained of the condition of the streets.

antly close to my door, even in the worst of the winter, when, though I have a little garden at the back of my house, I dislike going into it, because the things look all so dead: and find my walk on the whole pleasanter in the streets, these being always perfectly clean, and the wood-carving of the houses prettier than much of our indoor furniture. But it was about the streets I wanted to tell you. The Utopians have the oddest way of carrying out things, when once they begin, as far as they can go; and it occurred to them one dirty December long since, when they, like us, had only crossing-sweepers, that they might just as well sweep the whole of the street as the crossings of it, so that they might cross anywhere. Of course that meant more work for the sweepers; but the Utopians have always hands enough for whatever work is to be done in the open air;—they appointed a due number of broomsmen to every quarter of the town; and since then, at any time of the year, it is in our little town as in great Rotterdam when Dr. Brown saw it on his journey from Norwich to Colen in 1668, “the women go about in white slippers,” which is pretty to see.¹ Now, Sir, it would, of course, be more difficult to manage anything like this in London, because, for one thing, in our town we have a rivulet running down every street that slopes to the river; and besides, because you have coal-dust and smoke and what not to deal with; and the habit of spitting, which is worst of all—in Utopia a man would as soon vomit as spit in the street (or anywhere else, indeed, if he could help it). But still it is certain we can at least anywhere do as much for the whole street, as we have done for the crossing: and to show that we can, I mean, on 1st January next, to take three street-sweepers into constant service; they will be the first workpeople I employ with the interest of the St. George’s fund, of which I

¹ Dr. Edward Browne, the son of the author of the *Religio Medici*, Sir Thomas Browne. Writing to his father from Rotterdam, in 1668, he says: “The cleanness and neatness of this towne is so new unto mee, that it affordeth great satisfaction, most persons going about the streets in white slippers.”—*Life and Works of Sir Thomas Browne*. Pickering, 1836. Vol. i. p. 154.

shall get my first dividend this January ; and, whenever I can get leave from the police and inhabitants, I will keep my three sweepers steadily at work for eight hours a day ; and I hope soon to show you a bit of our London streets kept as clean as the deck of a ship of the line.¹

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

December 27, 1871.

IV.—EDUCATION FOR RICH AND POOR.

[From "The Pall Mall Gazette," January 31, 1868.]

TRUE EDUCATION.²

To the Editor of "*The Pall Mall Gazette*."

SIR: The letter you published yesterday from a parish schoolboy of "Sixty Years Since" at Weary-faulds (confirmed as it would be doubtless in all practical respects by testimony of English boys educated at Waverley Honour) has my hearty sympathy ; but I am wearier than any tenant of Weary-faulds of seeing this subject of education always treated as if "education" only meant teaching children to write or to cipher or to

¹ Mr. Ruskin was as good as his word, and his sweepers were at work in the following January.

² The Pall Mall Gazette of January 27 contained a leader on "Compulsory Education," and that of January 29 one upon a speech of the Bishop of Oxford on the same subject, made at a meeting in connection with the National Society, held at Tunbridge Wells on the preceding day. In the Gazette of January 30 appeared a letter referring to these articles, headed "Sixty Years Ago," and signed "One who has walked four miles to the Parish School." It described the writer's early home, situated in some lowland parish north of the Tweed, and divided into five or six estates, such as "Whinny-hills" and "Weary-faulds," the lairds of which were shortly called "Whinny" or "Weary" after their properties. In this primitive village, where supervision, much less compulsion, in education was never heard of, "no child grew up without learning to read," and the morals of the parish were on the whole good ; the children quarrelled, but did not steal.—The reader will remember that the second title of Waverley is 'Tis Sixty Years Since.

repeat catechism. You know, Sir, as you have shown by your comments on the Bishop of Oxford's last speech on this subject, and you could not at present use your influence more beneficially than by farther showing that the real education—the education which alone should be compulsory—means nothing of the kind. It means teaching children to be clean, active, honest, and useful. All these characters can be taught, and cannot be acquired by sickly and ill-dispositioned children without being taught; but they can be untaught to any extent, by evil habit and example at home. Public schools, in which the aim was to form character faithfully, would return them in due time to their parents, worth more than their "weight in gold." That is the real answer to the objections founded on economical difficulties. Will you not make some effort, Sir, to get your readers to feel this? I am myself quite sick of saying it over and over again in vain.

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, Jan. 31, 1868.

[From "The Glasgow Herald," June 5, 1874. Also reprinted in "The Times" of June 6, 1874.]

THE VALUE OF LECTURES.¹

ROME, 26th May, 1874.

MY DEAR SIR: I have your obliging letter, but am compelled by increase of work to cease lecturing except at Oxford—and practically there also—for, indeed, I find the desire of audi-

¹ This letter was written to Mr. Chapman, of the Glasgow Athenæum Lecture Committee, in reply to a request that Mr. Ruskin would lecture at their meetings during the winter. Writing from Oxford, four years later, in answer to a similar request, Mr. Ruskin wrote as follows: "Nothing can advance art in any district of this accursed machine-and-devil driven England until she changes her mind in many things, and my time for talking is past.—Ever faithfully yours, J. Ruskin. I lecture here, but only on the art of the past." (Extract given in the Times, Feb. 12, 1878.)

ences to be *audiences only* becoming an entirely pestilent character of the age. Everybody wants to *hear*—nobody to read—nobody to think ; to be excited for an hour—and, if possible, amused ; to get the knowledge it has cost a man half his life to gather, first sweetened up to make it palatable, and then kneaded into the smallest possible pills—and to swallow it homœopathically and be wise—this is the passionate desire and hope of the multitude of the day.

It is not to be done. A living comment quietly given to a class on a book they are earnestly reading—this kind of lecture is eternally necessary and wholesome ; your modern fire-working, smooth-downy-curry-and-strawberry-ice-and-milk-punch-altogether lecture is an entirely pestilent and abominable vanity ; and the miserable death of poor Dickens, when he might have been writing blessed books till he was eighty, but for the pestiferous demand of the mob, is a very solemn warning to us all, if we would take it.¹

God willing, I will go on writing, and as well as I can. There are three volumes published of my Oxford lectures,² in which every sentence is set down as carefully as may be. If people want to learn from me, let them read them or my monthly letter "*Fors Clavigera*." If they don't care for these, I don't care to talk to them.

Truly yours,
J. RUSKIN.

¹ The evil result on Dickens' health of his last series of readings at St. James's Hall, in the early part of 1870, scarcely four months before his death, is thus noted by Mr. Forster : " Little remains to be told that has not in it almost unmixed sorrow and pain. Hardly a day passed, while the readings went on or after they closed, unvisited by some effect or other of the disastrous excitement consequent on them."—*Life of Charles Dickens*, vol. iii. p. 493.

² *Aratra Pentelici*, *The Eagle's Nest* ; and either *Val d'Arno* (Orpington, 1874) or *Lectures on Art* (Clarendon Press, 1870).

[Date and place of publication unknown.]

*THE CRADLE OF ART!*¹

18th Feb. 1876.

MY DEAR SIR: I lose a frightful quantity of time because people won't read what I ask them to read, nor believe anything of what I tell them, and yet ask me to talk whenever they think they can take a shilling or two at the door by me. I have written fifty times, if once, that you can't have art where you have smoke; you may have it in hell, perhaps, for the Devil is too clever not to consume his own smoke, if he wants to. But you will never have it in Sheffield. You may learn something about nature, shrivelled, and stones, and iron; and what little you can see of that sort, I'm going to try and show you. But pictures, never.

Ever faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

If for no other reason, no artist worth sixpence in a day would live in Sheffield, nor would any one who cared for pictures—for a million a year.

[From "The Sheffield Daily Telegraph," September 7, 1875.]

*ST. GEORGE'S MUSEUM.*²

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE.

MY DEAR SIR: I am obliged by your note, but the work of the St. George's Company is necessarily distinct from all other. My "museum" may be perhaps nothing but a two-

¹ This letter was in answer to a request of the Sheffield Society of Artists similar to that replied to in the preceding letter.

² This letter was written in answer to one addressed to Mr. Ruskin by Mr. W. Bragge, F.R.G.S., who, having read in Fors Clavigera of Mr. Ruskin's intention to found the St. George's Museum at Sheffield, wrote to inform him that another museum, in which his might be incorporated, was already in course of building. It was read by Mr. Bragge at a dinner which followed the opening of Western Park to the public on September 6, 1875.

windowed garret. But it will have in it nothing but what deserves respect in art or admiration in nature. A great museum in the present state of the public mind is simply an exhibition of the possible modes of doing wrong in art, and an accumulation of uselessly multiplied ugliness in misunderstood nature. Our own museum at Oxford is full of distorted skulls, and your Sheffield ironwork department will necessarily contain the most barbarous abortions that human rudeness has ever produced with human fingers. The capitals of the iron shafts in any railway station, for instance, are things to make a man wish—for shame of his species—that he had been born a dog or a bee.

Ever faithfully yours,
J. RUSKIN.

P. S.—I have no doubt the geological department will be well done, and my poor little cabinets will enable your men to use it to better advantage, but would be entirely lost if united with it.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," January 15, 1870.]

THE MORALITY OF FIELD SPORTS.

To the Editor of the "The Daily Telegraph."

SIR: As, thirty years ago,¹ I publicly expressed a strong opinion on the subject of field sports, and as with more accurate knowledge I hold the same opinion still, and more strongly—will you permit me to place the controversy between your

¹ In various parts of *Modern Painters*. See vol. v. p. 281. "I wish, however, the reader distinctly to understand that the expressions of reprobation of field-sports which he will find scattered through these volumes . . . refer only to the chase and the turf; that is to say, to hunting, shooting, and horse-racing, but not to athletic exercises. I have just as deep a respect for boxing, wrestling, cricketing, and rowing, as contempt of all the various modes of wasting wealth, time, land, and energy of soul, which have been invented by the pride and selfishness of men, in order to enable them to be healthy in uselessness, and get quit of the burdens of their own lives, without condescending to make themselves serviceable to others."

correspondents,¹ in which I have no time to take part, on somewhat clearer grounds.

Reprobation of fox-hunting on the ground of cruelty to the fox is entirely futile. More pain is caused to the draught-horses of London in an hour by avariciously overloading them, than to all the foxes in England by the hunts of the year ; and the rending of body and heart in human death, caused by neglect, in our country cottages, in any one winter, could not be equalled by the death-pangs of any quantity of foxes.

The real evils of fox-hunting are that it wastes the time, misapplies the energy, exhausts the wealth, narrows the capacity, debases the taste, and abates the honor of the upper classes of this country ; and instead of keeping, as your correspondent "Forester" supposes, "thousands from the work-house," it sends thousands of the poor, both there, and into the grave.

The athletic training given by fox-hunting is excellent ; and such training is vitally necessary to the upper classes. But it ought always to be in real service to their country ; in personal agricultural labor at the head of their tenantry ; and in extending English life and dominion in waste regions, against the adverse powers of nature. Let them become Captains of Emigration ;—hunt down the foxes that spoil the Vineyard of the World ; and keep their eyes on the leading hound, in Packs of Men.

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

DENMARK HILL, Jan. 14.

J. RUSKIN.²

¹ The correspondence originated as follows: In the Fortnightly Review of October, 1869, appeared an article against fox-hunting by Mr. E. A. Freeman, entitled, "The Morality of Field Sports," to which Mr. Anthony Trollope replied by one entitled "The Morality of Hunting," in the Fortnightly of the following December. Mr. Freeman then rejoined by two letters of considerable length, addressed to the editor of the Daily Telegraph (December 18 and 29), in whose columns some discussion of the matter had already been carried on, whilst one of its leaders had strongly supported Mr. Freeman's views. Other correspondence on the subject was still appearing in the Daily Telegraph from day to day at the time Mr. Ruskin wrote the present letter.

² At the annual meeting of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Mr. Ruskin is reported (Daily News, July 11, 1877) to have

[From "The Daily Telegraph," December 11, 1871.]

DRUNKENNESS AND CRIME.

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph."

SIR: I am greatly surprised by the slightness of your article to-day on the statistics of drunkenness and the relative statistics of crime.¹

The tables you have given, if given only in that form by Professor Leone Levi, are anything but "instructive." Liquor is not, for such purpose, to be measured only by the gallon, but by the gallon with accompanying statement of strength.

Crime is not for such purpose to be measured by the number of criminals, but by the number, with accompanying

said that "as he was somewhat concerned in the studies of the scientific world, it might be thought that he sympathized in the resistance offered, not without some ground of reason, to some of the more enthusiastic and, he feared in some respects, exaggerated and sentimental actions of the society. He pleaded in the name of poor animals that none of them should act too much on the feeling of pity, or without making a thoroughly judicial inquiry. In looking at the report, he found part of the society's admirable evidence mixed up with sentimental tales of fiction and other means of exciting mere emotion, which had caused them to lose power with those who had the greatest influence in the prevention of the abuses which the society desired to check. The true justice of their cause lay in the relations which men had had with animals from the time when both were made. They had endeavoured to prevent cruelty to animals; they had not enough endeavoured to promote affection for animals. He thought they had had too much to do in the police courts, and not enough in the field and the cottage garden. As one who was especially interested in the education of the poor, he believed that he could not educate them on animals, but that he could educate them by animals. He trusted to the pets of children for their education just as much as to their tutors. He rejoiced in the separate organization of the Ladies' Committee, and looked to it to give full extent and power to action which would supersede all their expensive and painful disputable duties. Without perfect sympathy with the animals around them, no gentleman's education, no Christian education, could be of any possible use. In concluding, he pleaded for an expansion of the protection extended by the society to wild birds."

¹ A short leader to which special reference is unnecessary.

statement of the crime committed. Drunkenness very slightly encourages theft, very largely encourages murder, and universally encourages idleness, which is not a crime apparent in a tabular form. But, whatever results might, even by such more accurate statement, be attainable, are not material to the question at issue. Drunkenness is not the *cause* of crime in any case. It is itself crime in every case. A gentleman will not knock out his wife's brains when he is drunk ; but it is nevertheless his duty to remain sober.

Much more is it his duty to teach his peasantry to remain sober, and to furnish them with sojourn more pleasant than the pothouse, and means of amusement less circumscribed than the pot. And the encouragement of drunkenness, for the sake of the profit on sale of drink, is certainly one of the most criminal methods of assassination for money hitherto adopted by the bravos of any age or country.

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, Dec. 9.

[From "The Pall Mall Gazette," November 4, 1872. (Also reprinted in "Fors Clavigera," Letter xlviii., p. 318, vol. ii.)]

MADNESS AND CRIME.

To the Editor of "The Pall Mall Gazette."

SIR: Towards the close of the excellent article on the Taylor trial in your issue for October 31¹ you say that people never will be, nor ought to be, persuaded, "to treat criminals simply as vermin which they destroy, and not as men who are to be punished." Certainly not, Sir! Who ever talked, or thought, of regarding criminals "simply" as anything (or innocent people either, if there be any)? But regarding criminals complexly and accurately, they are partly men, partly vermin; what is human in them you must punish—what is verminicular, abolish. Anything between—if you can find it—

¹ The trial of Taylor was for murder, and ended in his acquittal on the ground of insanity.

I wish you joy of, and hope you may be able to preserve it to society. Insane persons, horses, dogs, or cats become vermin when they become dangerous. I am sorry for darling Fido, but there is no question about what is to be done with him.

Yet, I assure you, Sir, insanity is a tender point with me. One of my best friends has just gone mad; and all the rest say I am mad myself. But if ever I murder anybody—and, indeed, there are numbers of people I should like to murder—I won't say that I ought to be hanged; for I think nobody but a bishop or a bank-director can ever be rogue enough to deserve hanging; but I particularly, and with all that is left me of what I imagine to be sound mind, request that I may be immediately shot.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. RUSKIN.

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,
November 2.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," December 26, 1868.]

EMPLOYMENT FOR THE DESTITUTE POOR AND CRIMINAL CLASSES.

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph."

SIR: Your admirable leader of to-day¹ will do great good; but it will do more if you complete it by pointing out the chief reason for the frequent failure of almsgiving in accomplishing any real benefit to the poor. No almsgiving of money is so helpful as almsgiving of care and thought; the giving of money without thought is indeed continually mischievous; but the invective of the economist against indiscriminate charity is idle, if it be not coupled with pleading for discriminate charity, and, above all, for that charity which discerns the uses that people may be put to, and helps them by setting them to work in those services. That is the help beyond all others; find out how to make useless people useful, and let them earn their money instead of begging it. Few are so feeble as to be

¹ A Christmas article on Charity.

incapable of all occupation, none so faultful but that occupation, well chosen, and kindly compelled, will be medicine for them in soul and body. I have lately drawn up a few notes for private circulation on possible methods of employment for the poor.¹ The reasons which weighed with me in not publishing them have now ceased to exist; and in case you should think the paper worth its room in your columns, and any portion of it deserving your ratification, I send it you herewith, and remain your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, S.E., Dec. 24.

NOTES ON THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF EMPLOYMENT FOR THE DESTITUTE AND CRIMINAL CLASSES.

[For Private Circulation only. 1868. (Pp. 15, including the title-page. Printed by Strangeways & Walden, Castle Street, Leicester Square.)²]

THE first great fact on which all wise and enduring legislation respecting labor must be founded, is, that the character of men depends more on their occupations than on any teaching we can give them, or principles with which we can imbue them.

The employment forms the habits of body and mind, and these are the constitution of the man—the greater part of his moral or persistent nature, whatever effort, under special excitement, he may make to change or overcome them. Employment is the half, and the primal half, of education—it is the warp of it; and the fineness or the endurance of all subse-

¹ See the following pages.

² There were two editions of this pamphlet. The first was entitled "First Notes on the General Principles of Employment for the Destitute and Criminal Classes. By John Ruskin, A.M. For private circulation only. 1868" (pp. 11, including the title-page. London: Strangeways & Walden, printers, Castle Street, Leicester Square). Mr. Ruskin enclosed the second edition to the Daily Telegraph, where almost the whole of the pamphlet was reprinted. The differences between the two editions consisted only in one or two additions in the second (see below, pages 321 and 324, notes.)

quently woven pattern depends wholly on its straightness and strength. And whatever difficulty there may be in tracing through past history the remoter connections of event and cause, one chain of sequence is always clear: the formation, namely, of the character of nations by their employments, and the determination of their final fate by their character. The moment and the first direction of circumstances, of decisive revolutions, often depend on accident; but their persistent course, and their consequences, depend wholly on the nature of the people. The passing of the Reform Bill by the late English Parliament¹ may have been more or less accidental: the results of the measure now rest on the character of the English people, as it has been developed by their recent interests, occupations, and habits of life. Whether as a body, they employ their new powers for good or evil will depend not on their facilities for knowledge, nor even on the general intelligence they may possess, but on the number of persons among them whom wholesome employments have rendered familiar with the duties, and temperate in their estimate of the promises of life.

But especially in passing laws respecting the treatment or employment of improvident and more or less vicious persons it is to be remembered that as men are not to be made heroes by an act of heroism, but must be brave before they can perform it, so they are not made villains by the commission of a crime, but were villains before they committed it; and that the right of public interference with their conduct begins when they begin to corrupt themselves, not merely at the moment when they have proved themselves hopelessly corrupt.

All measures of reformation are effective in exact proportion to their timeliness: partial decay may be cut away and cleansed; incipient error corrected; but there is a point at which corruption can no more be stayed, nor wandering recalled; it has been the manner of modern philanthropy to remain passive until that precise period, and to leave the rich

¹ The reform bill of 1867. The late parliament had been dissolved on November 11, and the new one had just sat (December 10, 1868).

to perish and the foolish to stray, while it exhausted itself in frantic exertions to raise the dead and reform the dust.

The recent direction of a great weight of public opinion against capital punishment is, I think, the sign of an awakening perception that punishment is the last and worst instrument in the hands of the legislature for the prevention of crime.

The true instruments of reformation are employment and reward—not punishment. Aid the willing, honor the virtuous, and compel the idle into occupation, and there will be no need for the compelling of any into the great and last indolence of death. The beginning of all true reformation among the criminal classes depends on the establishment of institutions for their active employment, while their criminality is still unripe, and their feelings of self-respect, capacities of affection, and sense of justice not altogether quenched. That those who are desirous of employment should be always able to find it, will hardly, at the present day, be disputed ; but that those who are undesirous of employment should of all persons be the most strictly compelled to it, the public are hardly yet convinced. If the damage of the principal thoroughfares in their capital city, and the multiplication of crimes more ghastly than ever yet disgraced a nominal civilization, do not convince them, they will not have to wait long before they receive sterner lessons. For our neglect of the lower orders has reached a point, at which it begins to bear its necessary fruit, and every day makes the harvest darker and more sure.¹

The great principles by which employment should be regulated may be briefly stated as follows :

1. There being three great classes of mechanical powers at our disposal, namely, (a) vital muscular power ; (b) natural mechanical power of wind, water, and electricity ; and (c) artificially produced mechanical power ; it is the first principle of economy to use all available vital power first, then the inex-

¹ The Daily Telegraph reprinted the pamphlet from this point to the end.

pensive natural forces, and only at last to have recourse to artificial power. And this, because it is always better for a man to work with his own hands to feed and clothe himself, than to stand idle while a machine works for him; and if he cannot by all the labor healthily possible to him, feed and clothe himself, then it is better to use an inexpensive machine—as a wind-mill or water-mill—than a costly one like a steam-engine, so long as we have natural force enough at our disposal. Whereas at present we continually hear economists regret that the water-powers of the cascades or streams of a country should be lost, but hardly ever that the muscular power of its idle inhabitants should be lost; and, again, we see vast districts, as the south of Provence, where a strong wind¹ blows steady all day long for six days out of seven throughout the year, without a wind-mill, while men are continually employed a hundred miles to the north, in digging fuel to obtain artificial power.

But the principal point of all to be kept in view is that in every idle arm and shoulder throughout the country there is a certain quantity of force, equivalent to the force of so much fuel; and that it is mere insane waste to dig for coal for our force, while the vital force is unused; and not only unused, but, in being so, corrupting and polluting itself. We waste our coal and spoil our humanity at one and the same instant. Therefore, whenever there is an idle arm, always save coal with it, and the stores of England will last all the longer. And precisely the same argument answers the common one about “taking employment out of the hands of the industrious laborer.” Why, what is “employment” but the putting out of vital force instead of mechanical force? We are continually in search of means of strength—to pull, to hammer, to fetch, to carry; we waste our future resources to get power, while we leave all the living fuel to burn itself out in mere

¹ In order fully to utilize this natural power, we only require machinery to turn the variable into a constant velocity—no insurmountable difficulty.*

* This note was not contained in the first edition of the pamphlet, and was not reprinted by the Daily Telegraph.

pestiferous breath and production of its variously noisome forms of ashes! Clearly, if we want fire for force, we want men for force first. The industrious hands *must* have so much to do that they can do no more, or else we need not use machines to help them : then use the idle hands first. Instead of dragging petroleum with a steam-engine, put it on a canal, and drag it with human arms and shoulders. Petroleum cannot possibly be in a hurry to arrive anywhere. We can always order that and many other things time enough before we want it. So the carriage of everything which does not spoil by keeping may most wholesomely and safely be done by water-traction and sailing vessels, and no healthier work nor better discipline can men be put to than such active portorage.

2. In employing all the muscular power at our disposal, we are to make the employments we choose as educational as possible. For a wholesome human employment is the first and best method of education, mental as well as bodily. A man taught to plough, row or steer well, and a woman taught to cook properly and make dress neatly, are already educated in many essential moral habits. Labor considered as a discipline has hitherto been thought of only for criminals ; but the real and noblest function of labor is to prevent crime, and not to be *Reformatory* but *Formatory*.

3. The third great principle of employment is, that whenever there is pressure of poverty to be met, all enforced occupation should be directed to the production of useful articles only, that is to say, of food, of simple clothing, of lodging, or of the means of conveying, distributing, and preserving these. It is yet little understood by economists, and not at all by the public, that the employment of persons in a useless business cannot relieve ultimate distress. The money given to employ riband-makers at Coventry is merely so much money withdrawn from what would have employed lace-makers at Honiton, or makers of something else, as useless, elsewhere. We *must* spend our money in some way, at some time, and it cannot at any time be spent without employing somebody. If we gamble it away, the person who wins it must spend it ; if we lose it in a railroad speculation, it has gone into some one

else's pockets, or merely gone to pay navvies for making a useless embankment, instead of to pay ribband or button makers for making useless ribands or buttons ; we cannot lose it (unless by actually destroying it) without giving employment of some kind, and therefore, whatever quantity of money exists, the relative quantity of employment must some day come out of it ; but the distress of the nation signifies that the employments given have produced nothing that will support its existence. Men cannot live on ribands, or buttons, or velvet, or by going quickly from place to place ; and every coin spent in useless ornament, or useless motion, is so much withdrawn from the national means of life. Whereas every coin spent in cultivating ground, in repairing lodgings, in making necessary and good roads, in preventing danger by sea or land, and in carriage of food or fuel where they are required, is so much absolute and direct gain to the whole nation. To cultivate land round Coventry makes living easier at Honiton, and every house well built in Edinburgh makes lodgings cheaper in Glasgow and London.

4th, and lastly. Since for every idle person some one else must be working somewhere to provide him with clothes and food, and doing therefore double the quantity of work that would be enough for his own needs, it is only a matter of pure justice to compel the idle person to work for his maintenance himself. The conscription has been used in many countries to take away laborers who supported their families from their useful work, and maintain them for purposes chiefly of military display at public expense. Since this had been long endured by the most civilized nations, let it not be thought that they would not much more gladly endure a conscription which should seize only the vicious and idle already living by criminal procedures at the public expense, and which should discipline and educate them to labor, which would not only maintain themselves, but be serviceable to the commonwealth. The question is simply this : we must feed the drunkard, vagabond, and thief. But shall we do so by letting them rob us of their food, and do no work for it ; or shall we give them their food in appointed quantity, and enforce their doing work

which shall be worth it, and which, in process of time, will redeem their own characters, and make them happy and serviceable members of society?¹

The different classes of work for which bodies of men could be consistently organized might ultimately become numerous; these following divisions of occupation may at once be suggested.

1. Road-Making.—Good roads to be made wherever needed, and kept in constant repair; and the annual loss on unfrequented roads in spoiled horses, strained wheels, and time, done away with.

2. Bringing in of Waste Land.—All waste lands not necessary for public health, to be made accessible and gradually reclaimed.

3. Harbour-Making.—The deficiencies of safe or convenient harbourage in our smaller ports to be remedied; other harbours built at dangerous points of coast, and a disciplined body of men always kept in connection with the pilot and life-boat services. There is room for every order of intelligence in this work, and for a large body of superior officers.

4. Portage.—All heavy goods not requiring speed in transit, to be carried (under preventive duty on transit by railroad) by canal boats, employing men for draught, and the merchant shipping service extended by sea; so that no ships may be wrecked for want of hands, while there are idle ones in mischief on shore.

5. Repair of Buildings.—A body of men in various trades to be kept at the disposal of the authorities in every large town for consistent repair of buildings, especially the houses of the poorer orders, who, if no such provision were made, could not employ workmen on their own houses, but would simply live with rent walls and roofs.

6. Dress-Making.—Substantial dress, of standard material and kind, strong shoes, and stout bedding, to be manufactured for the poor, so as to render it unnecessary for them,

¹ Here the first edition of the pamphlet ends; the remaining sentences being contained in the second edition only.

unless by extremity of improvidence, to wear cast clothes, or be without sufficiency of clothing.

7. Works of Art.—Schools to be established on thoroughly sound principles of manufacture and use of materials, and with simple and, for given periods, unalterable modes of work; first in pottery, and embracing gradually metal work, sculpture, and decorative painting; the two points insisted upon, in distinction from ordinary commercial establishments, being perfectness of material to the utmost attainable degree; and the production of everything by hand-work, for the special purpose of developing personal power and skill in the workman.

The two last departments, and some subordinate branches of the others, would include the service of women and children.

[From "The Y. M. A. Magazine," conducted by the Young Men's Association, Clapham Congregational Church. September, 1879. Vol. iii., No. 12, p. 242.]

BLINDNESS AND SIGHT.¹

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
18th July, 1879.

MY DEAR SIR: The reason I never answered was—I now find—the difficulty of explaining my fixed principle never to join in any invalid charities. All the foolish world is ready to help in *them*; and will spend large incomes in trying to make idiots think, and the blind read, but will leave the noblest intellects to go to the Devil, and the brightest eyes to remain spiritually blind forever! All *my* work is to help those who *have* eyes and see not.

Ever faithfully yours, J. RUSKIN.

THOS. POCOCK, Esq.

I must add that, to *my* mind, the prefix of "Protestant" to your society's name indicates far *stonier* blindness than any it will relieve.

¹ This letter was sent by Mr. Ruskin to the Secretary of the Protestant Blind Pension Society in answer to an application for subscriptions which Mr. Ruskin had mislaid, and thus left unanswered.

[From "The Y. M. A. Magazine," October, 1879, Vol. iv., No. 1, p. 12.]

THE EAGLE'S NEST.¹

To the Editor of "The Y. M. A. Magazine."

MY DEAR SIR : There is a mass of letters on my table this morning, and I am not quite sure if the "Y. M. A. Magazine," among them, is the magazine which yours of the 15th speaks of as "enclosed ;" but you are entirely welcome to print my letter about Blind Asylums anywhere, and if in the "Y. M. A." I should be glad to convey to its editor, at the same time, my thanks for the article on "Growing Old," which has not a little comforted me this morning—and my modest recommendation that, by way of antidote to the No. III. paper on the Sun, he should reproduce the 104th, 115th, and 116th paragraphs of my "Eagle's Nest," closing them with this following sentence from the 12th Book of the Laws of Plato, dictating the due time for the sittings of a Parliament seeking righteous policy (and composed, they may note farther, for such search, of Young Men and Old) :

ἐκάστης μὲν ἡμέρας συλλεγόμενος ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἀπ' ὄρθρου μέχρι
περ' ἂν ἥλιος ἀνίσχῃ.

Ever faithfully yours, J. RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE, *August 17th*, 1879.

[From "The Y. M. A. Magazine," November, 1879, Vol. iv., No. 2, p. 36.]

POLITICS IN YOUTH.

To the Editor of "The Y. M. A. Magazine."

MY DEAR SIR : I am heartily obliged by your publication of those pieces of "Eagle's Nest," and generally interested in your Magazine, papers on politics excepted. Young men have

¹ The article on "Growing Old," (Y. M. A., August, 1879) was "a study from the poets" on happiness in old age ; that upon the sun, contained in the same number of the magazine, dealt with the spots in the sun, and the various scientific opinions about them ; the paragraphs reprinted from the Eagle's Nest are upon the sun as the Light, and Health, and Guide of Life.

no business with politics at all ; and when the time is come for them to have opinions, they will find all political parties resolve themselves at last into two—that which holds with Solomon, that a rod is for the fool's back,¹ and that which holds with the fool himself, that a crown is for his head, a vote for his mouth, and all the universe for his belly.

Ever faithfully yours,

(Signed) J. RUSKIN.

The song on “Life's Mid-day” is very beautiful, except the third stanza. The river of God will one day sweep down the great city, not feed it.²

SHEFFIELD, *October 19th*, 1879.

[From the “New Year's Address and Messages to Blackfriars Bible Class.”
Aberdeen, 1873.]

“ACT, ACT IN THE LIVING PRESENT.”³

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,
Christmas Eve, '72.

MY DEAR SIR : I am always much interested in any effort such as you are making on the part of the laity.

If you care to give your class a word directly from me, say to them that they will find it well, throughout life, never to trouble themselves about what they ought *not* to do, but about what they *ought* to do. The condemnation given from the

¹ Proverbs xxvi. 3, and x. 13.

² The following are the lines specially alluded to :

Shall the strong full-flowing river, bearing on its mighty breast
Half the wealth of some proud nation, precious spoils of East and West,
Shall it mourn its mountain cradle and its infant heathery bed,
All its youthful songs and dances, as adown the hills it sped,
When by it in yon great city half a million mouths are fed?

[Y. M. A. Magazine, October, 1879.]

³ This and the two following letters were originally printed in different annual numbers of the above-named publication, to whose editor (Mr. John Leith, 75 Crown Street, Aberdeen) they were addressed. Amongst the “messages” contained in them are some from Mr. Gladstone and others.

judgment throne—most solemnly described—is all for the *undones* and not for the *donees*.¹ People are perpetually afraid of doing wrong ; but unless they are doing its reverse energetically, they do it all day long, and the degree does not matter. The Commandments are necessarily negative, because a new set of positive ones would be needed for every person : while the negatives are constant.

But Christ sums them all into two rigorous positions, and the first position for young people is active and attentive kindness to animals, supposing themselves set by God to feed His real sheep and ravens before the time comes for doing either figuratively. There is scarcely any conception left of the character which animals and birds might have if kindly treated in a wild state.

Make your young hearers resolve to be honest in their work in this life.—Heaven will take care of them for the other.

Truly yours,
JOHN RUSKIN.

[From "New Year's Address and Messages to Blackfriars Bible Class."
Aberdeen, 1874.]

"LABORARE EST ORARE."

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,
December, 1873.

MY DEAR SIR : I should much like to send your class some message, but have no time for anything I like.

My own constant *cry* to all Bible readers is a very simple one—Don't think that Nature (human or other) is corrupt ; don't think that you yourself are elect out of it ; and don't think to serve God by praying instead of obeying.

Ever, my dear Sir, very faithfully yours,
JOHN RUSKIN.

¹ See the tenth of Mr. Ruskin's letters on the Lord's Prayer, *Contemporary Review*, December, 1879, p. 550.

[From "New Year's Address," etc. (as above), 1878.]

A PAGAN MESSAGE.

HERNE HILL, LONDON, S.E.
19 Dec. 1877.

MY DEAR SIR : I am sure you know as well as I that the best message for any of your young men who really are trying to read their Bibles is whatever they first chance to read on whatever morning.

But here's a Pagan message for them, which will be a grandly harmonized bass for whatever words they get on the New Year.

Inter spem curamque, timores et inter iras,
*Omnem crede diem tibi diluxisse supremum.*¹

(“Amid hope and sorrow, amid fear and wrath, believe *every* day that has dawned on thee to be thy last.”)

Ever faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

[From "The Science of Life,"]

THE FOUNDATIONS OF CHIVALRY.²

VENICE, February 8th, 1877.

MY DEAR —: This is a nobly done piece of work of yours—a fireman's duty in fire of hell; and I would fain help you in all I could, but my way of going at the thing would be from the top down—putting the fire out with the sun, not with vain sprinklings. People would say I wasn't practical,

¹ Horace, Epistles, i. 4. 12.

² The following letters were addressed by Mr. Ruskin to the author of a pamphlet on continence, entitled *The Science of Life*. There were two editions of the pamphlet, and of these only the second contained the first and last of these letters, whilst only the first contained the last letter but one. Some passages also in the other letters are omitted in the first edition, and a few slight alterations are made in the second in the letter of February 10.

as usual of course ; but it seems to me the last thing one should do in the business is to play Lord Angelo, and set bar and door to deluge. Not but I should sift the windows of our Oxford print-sellers, if I had my full way in my Art Professorship ; but I can't say the tenth part of what I would. I'm in the very gist and main effort of quite other work, and can't get my mind turned to this rightly, for this, in the heart of it, involves—well, to say the whole range of moral philosophy, is nothing ; this, in the heart of it, one can't touch unless one knew the moral philosophy of angels also, and what that means, “but are as the angels in heaven.” For indeed there is no true conqueror of Lust but Love ; and in this beautifully scientific day of the British nation, in which you have no God to love any more, but only an omnipotent coagulation of copulation : in which you have no Law nor King to love any more, but only a competition and a constitution, and the oil of anointing for king and priest used to grease your iron wheels down hill : when you have no country to love any more, but “patriotism is nationally what selfishness is individually,”¹ such the eternally-damned modern view of the matter—the moral syphilis of the entire national blood : and, finally, when you have no true bride and groom to love each other any more, but a girl looking out for a carriage and a man for a position, what have you left on earth to take pleasure in, except theft and adultery ?

The two great vices play into each other's hands. Ill-got money is always finally spent on the harlot. Look at Hogarth's two 'prentices ; the sum of social wisdom is in that bit of rude art-work, if one reads it solemnly.

VENICE, *February 10th.*

HENCE, if from any place in earth, I ought to be able to send you some words of warning to English youths, for the ruin of this mighty city was all in one word—fornication.

¹ For further notice by Mr. Ruskin of this maxim, which occurs in Mr. Herbert Spencer's *Study of Sociology*, p. 205, see the article on Home and its Economies in the *Contemporary Review* of May, 1873, and *Bibliotheca Pastorum*, p. xxxiv.

Fools who think they can write history will tell you it was "the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope," and the like! Alas it was indeed the covering of every hope she had, in God and his Law.

For indeed, my dear friend, I doubt if you can fight this evil by mere heroism and common-sense. Not many men are heroes; not many are rich in common-sense. They will train for a boat-race; will they for the race of life? For the applause of the pretty girls in blue on the banks; yes. But to win the soul and body of a noble woman for their own forever, will they? Not as things are going, I think, though how or where they are to go or end is to me at present inconceivable.

You think, perhaps, I could help you therefore with a lecture on good taste and Titian? No, not at all; I might with one on politics, but that everybody would say was none of my business. Yet to understand the real meaning of the word "Sire," with respect to the rider as well as the horse, is indeed the basis of all knowledge, in policy, chivalry, and social order.

All that you have advised and exposed is wisely said and bravely told; but no advice, no exposure, will be of use, until the right relation exists again between the father and the mother and their son. To deserve his confidence, to keep it as the chief treasure committed in trust to them by God: to be the father his strength, the mother his sanctification, and both his chosen refuge, through all weakness, evil, danger, and amazement of his young life. My friend, while you still teach in Oxford the "philosophy," forsooth, of that poor cretinous wretch, Stuart Mill, and are endeavouring to open other "careers" to English women than that of the Wife and the Mother, you won't make your men chaste by recommending them to leave off tea.¹

¹ I have to state that this expression regarding Stuart Mill was not intended for separate publication; and to explain that in a subsequent but unpublished letter Mr. Ruskin explained it to refer to Mill's utter deficiency in the powers of the imagination.—The last words of this letter will be made clearer by noting that the pamphlet dealt with physical, as well as mental, diet.

VENICE, 11th February.

MY DEAR — : I would say much more, if I thought any one would believe me, of the especial calamity of this time, with respect to the discipline of youth—in having no food any more to offer to their imagination. Military distinction is no more possible by prowess, and the young soldier thinks of the hurdle-race as one of the lists and the field—but the noble temper will not train for that trial with equal joy. Clerical eminence—the bishopric or popular pastorate—may be tempting to men of genial pride or sensitive conceit : but the fierce blood that would have burned into a patriarch, or lashed itself into a saint—what “career” has your modern philosophy to offer to it?

The entire cessation of all employment for the faculty, which, in the best men of former ages, was continually exercised and satisfied in the realization of the presence of Christ with the hosts of Heaven, leaves the part of the brain which it employed absolutely vacant, and ready to suck in, with the avidity of vacuum, whatever pleasantness may be presented to the natural sight in the gas-lighted beauty of pantomime and casino Paradise.

All these disadvantages, you will say, are inevitable, and need not be dwelt upon. In my own school of St. George I mean to avoid them by simply making the study of Christianity a true piece of intellectual work ; my boys shall at least know what their fathers believed, before they make up their own wise minds to disbelieve it. They shall be infidels, if they choose, at thirty ; but only students, and very modest ones, at fifteen. But I shall at least ask of modern science so much help as shall enable me to begin to teach them at that age the physical laws relating to their own bodies, openly, thoroughly, and with awe ; and of modern civilization, I shall ask so much help as may enable me to teach them what is indeed right, and what wrong, for the citizen of a state of noble humanity to do, and permit to be done, by others, unaccused.

And if you can found two such chairs in Oxford—one, of the Science of Physical Health ; the other, of the Law of

Human Honor—you need not trim your Horace, nor forbid us our chatty afternoon tea.

I could say ever so much more, of course, if there were only time, or if it would be of any use—about the misapplication of the imagination. But really, the essential thing is the founding of real schools of instruction for both boys and girls—first, in domestic medicine and all that it means; and secondly, in the plain moral law of all humanity: “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” with all that *it* means.

Ever most truly yours,

J. RUSKIN.

VENICE, 12th February, '77.

MY DEAR — : Two words more, and an end. I have just re-read the paper throughout. There are two omissions which seem to me to need serious notice.

The first, that the entire code of counsel which you have drawn up, as that which a father should give his son, must be founded on the assumption that, at the proper time of life, the youth will be able, no less than eager, to marry. You ought certainly to point out, incidentally, what in my St. George's work I am teaching primarily, that unless this first economical condition of human society be secured, all props and plasters of its morality will be in vain.

And in the second place, you have spoken too exclusively of Lust, as if *it* were the normal condition of sexual feeling, and the only one properly to be called sexual. But the great relation of the sexes is Love, not Lust; that is the relation in which “male and female created He them;” putting into them, indeed, to be distinctly restrained to the office of fruitfulness, the brutal passion of Lust: but giving them the spiritual power of Love, that each spirit might be greater and purer by its bond to another associate spirit, in this world, and that which is to come; help-mates, and sharers of each other's joy forever.

Ever most truly yours,

J. RUSKIN.

MALHAM, July 3d, 1878.

DEAR — : I wish I were able to add a few more words, with energy and clearness, to my former letters, respecting a

subject of which my best strength—though in great part lately given to it, has not yet enforced the moment—the function, namely, of the arts of music and dancing as leaders and governors of the bodily, and instinctive mental, passions. No nation will ever bring up its youth to be at once refined and pure, till its masters have learned the *use* of all the arts, and primarily of these ; till they again recognize the gulf that separates the Doric and Lydian modes, and perceive the great ordinance of Nature, that the pleasures which, rightly ordered, exalt, discipline, and guide the hearts of men, if abandoned to a reckless and popular Dis-order, as surely degrade, scatter, and deceive alike the passions and intellect.

I observe in the journals of yesterday, announcement that the masters of many of our chief schools are at last desirous of making the elements of Greek art one of the branches of their code of instruction : but that they imagine such elements may be learned from plaster casts of elegant limbs and delicate noses.

They will find that Greek art can only be learned from Greek law, and from the religion which gives law of life to all the nations of the earth. Let our youth once more learn the meaning of the words “music,” “chorus,” and “hymn” practically ; and with the understanding that all such practice, from lowest to highest, is, if rightly done, always in the presence and to the praise of God ; and we shall have gone far to shield them in a noble peace and glorious safety from the darkest questions and the foulest sins that have perplexed and consumed the youth of past generations for the last four hundred years.

Have you ever heard the charity children sing in St. Paul’s ? Suppose we sometimes allowed God the honor of seeing our *noble* children collected in like manner to sing to Him, what think you might be the effect of such a festival—even if only held once a year—on the national manners and hearts ?

Ever faithfully and affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

V.—WOMEN : THEIR WORK AND THEIR DRESS.

[From "L'Espérance, Journal Mensuel, organe de l'Association des Femmes." Genève, le 8 Mai, 1873.]

WOMAN'S WORK.

Lettre à la Présidente.¹

MA CHÈRE MADAME : Je vous remercie de votre lettre si intéressante, car je sympathise de tout mon cœur avec la plupart des sentiments et des souhaits que vous y exprimez. Mais arriver à rendre des femmes plus nobles et plus sages est une chose ; les élever de façon à ce qu'elles entretiennent leurs maris est une autre !

Je ne puis trouver des termes assez forts pour exprimer la haine et le mépris que je ressens pour l'idée moderne qu'une femme doit cesser d'être mère, fille, ou femme pour qu'elle puisse devenir commis ou ingénieur.

Vous êtes toutes entièrement sottes dans cette matière. Le devoir d'un homme est d'entretenir sa femme et ses enfants, celui d'une femme est de le rendre heureux chez lui, et d'élever ses enfants sagement. Aucune femme n'est capable de faire plus que cela. Aucune femme ne doit faire moins, et un homme qui ne peut pas nourrir sa femme, et désire qu'elle travaille pour lui, mérite d'être pendu au-dessus de sa porte.

Je suis, Madame, fidèlement à vous,

J. RUSKIN.

[Date and place of publication unknown.]

FEMALE FRANCHISE.

VENICE, 29th May, 1870.

SIR : I am obliged by your note. I have no time for private correspondence at present, but you are quite right in your

¹ I have been unable to get access to the paper from which this letter is taken, and must therefore leave without explanation the fortunately unimportant references in its first paragraph.

supposition as to my views respecting female franchise. So far from wishing to give votes to women, I would fain take them away from most men.¹

Very sincerely yours,

J. RUSKIN.

[From "The Monthly Packet," November, 1863, p. 556.]

PROVERBS ON RIGHT DRESS.²

GENEVA, October 20th, 1862.

MY DEAR SIR: I am much obliged by your letter: pardon me if for brevity's sake I answer with appearance of dogmatism. You will see the subject treated as fully as I am able in the course of the papers on political economy, of which the two first have already appeared in *Fraser's Magazine*.³

The man and woman are meant by God to be perfectly noble and beautiful in each other's eyes. The dress is right which makes them so. The best dress is that which is beautiful in the eyes of noble and wise persons.

Right dress is therefore that which is fit for the station in life, and the work to be done in it; and which is otherwise graceful—becoming—lasting—healthful—and easy; on occasion, splendid; *always* as beautiful as possible.

Right dress is therefore strong—simple—radiantly clean—carefully put on—carefully kept.

Cheap dress, bought for cheapness sake, and costly dress bought for costliness sake, are *both* abominations. Right

¹ So also in writing an excuse for absence from a lecture upon Woman's Work and Woman's Sphere, given on behalf of the French female refugees by Miss Emily Faithfull in February, 1871, Mr. Ruskin said: "I most heartily sympathize with you in your purpose of defining woman's work and sphere. It is as refreshing as the dew's, and as defined as the moon's, but it is not the rain's nor the sun's." (Daily Telegraph, Feb. 21, 1871.)

² The preceding numbers of the *Monthly Packet* had contained various letters upon dress, and the present one was then sent to the Editor by the person to whom it was originally addressed.

³ In June and September, 1863. See the first two chapters of *Munera Pulveria*.

dress is bought *for* its worth, and *at* its worth ; and bought only when wanted.

Beautiful dress is chiefly beautiful in color—in harmony of parts—and in mode of putting on and wearing. Rightness of mind is in nothing more shown than in the mode of wearing simple dress.

Ornamentation involving design, such as embroidery, etc., produced *solely* by industry of *hand*, is highly desirable in the state dresses of all classes, down to the lowest peasantry.

National costume, wisely adopted and consistently worn, is not only desirable but necessary in right national organization. Obeying fashion is a great folly, and a greater crime ; but gradual changes in dress properly accompany a healthful national development.

The Scriptural authority for dress is centralized by Proverbs xxxi. 21, 22 ; and by 1 Samuel i. 24 ; the latter especially indicating the duty of the king or governor of the state ; as the former the duty of the housewife. It is necessary for the complete understanding of those passages, that the reader should know that “scarlet” means intense central radiance of pure color ; it is the type of purest color—between pale and dark—between sad and gay. It was therefore used with hyssop as a type of purification. There are many stronger passages, such as Psalm xlv. 13, 14 ; but as some people read them under the impression of their being figurative, I need not refer to them. The passages in the Prophecies and Epistles against dress apply only to its abuses. Dress worn for the sake of vanity, or coveted in jealousy, is as evil as anything else similarly so abused. A woman should earnestly desire to be beautiful, as she should desire to be intelligent ; her dress should be as studied as her words ; but if the one is worn or the other spoken in vanity or insolence, both are equally criminal.

I have not time, and there is no need, to refer you to the scattered notices of dress in my books : the most important is rather near the beginning of my “Political Economy of Art ;”¹

¹ See pp. 67-75 of the original, and 50-55 of the new edition (*A Joy for Ever*).

but I have not the book by me : if you make any use of this letter (you may make any you please), I should like you to add that passage to it, as it refers to the more immediate need of economy in dress, when the modes of its manufacture are irregular, and cause distress to the operative.

Believe me, my dear Sir, very faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

[From "*Macmillan's Magazine*," November, 1870, p. 80.]

SAD-COLORED COSTUMES.

DENMARK HILL, S.E., 14th Oct., 1870.

To the Editor of "*Macmillan's Magazine*."

SIR : At p. 423 of your current number, Mr. Stopford A. Brooke states that it is a proposal of mine for regenerating the country, that the poor should be "dressed all in one sad-colored costume."¹

It is, indeed, too probable that one sad-colored costume may soon be "your only wear," instead of the present motley—for both poor and rich. But the attainment of this monotony was never a proposition of mine ; and as I am well aware Mr. Brooke would not have been guilty of misrepresentation, if he had had time to read the books he was speaking of, I am sure he will concur in my request that you would print in full the passages to which he imagined himself to be referring.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

1. "You ladies like to lead the fashion : by all means lead it. Lead it thoroughly. Lead it far enough. Dress yourselves nicely, and dress everybody else nicely. Lead the fash-

¹ Mr. Stopford Brooke's article was a review of Mr. Ruskin's Lectures on Art, delivered at Oxford, and then recently published. In a note to the present letter the Editor of the Magazine stated Mr. Brooke's regret "at having been led by a slip of memory into making an inaccurate statement."

ions for the poor first ; make *them* look well, and you yourselves will look—in ways of which you have at present no conception—all the better.”—“Crown of Wild Olive” (1866), p. 18.¹

2. “In the simplest and clearest definition of it, economy, whether public or private, means the wise management of labor ; and it means this mainly in three senses : namely, first, applying your labor rationally ; secondly, preserving its produce carefully ; lastly, distributing its produce seasonably.

“I say first, applying your labor rationally ; that is, so as to obtain the most precious things you can, and the most lasting things by it : not growing oats in land where you can grow wheat, nor putting fine embroidery on a stuff that will not wear. Secondly, preserving its produce carefully ; that is to say, laying up your wheat wisely in storehouses for the time of famine, and keeping your embroidery watchfully from the moth ; and lastly, distributing its produce seasonably ; that is to say, being able to carry your corn at once to the place where the people are hungry, and your embroideries to the places where they are gay ; so fulfilling in all ways the wise man’s description, whether of the queenly housewife or queenly nation : ‘She riseth while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry, her clothing is silk and purple. Strength and honor are in her clothing, and she shall rejoice in time to come.’

“Now you will observe that in this description of the perfect economist, or mistress of a household, there is a studied expression of the balanced division of her care between the two great objects of utility and splendor : in her right hand, food and flax, for life and clothing ; in her left hand, the purple and the needlework, for honor and for beauty. . . . And in private and household economy you may always judge of its perfectness by its fair balance between the use and the pleasure of its possessions : you will see the wise cottager’s garden trimly divided between its well-set vegetables and its

¹ See the 1873 edition of the *Crown of Wild Olive*, p. 30, § 27.

fragrant flowers: you will see the good housewife taking pride in her pretty tablecloth and her glittering shelves, no less than in her well-dressed dish and full store-room: the care will alternate with gayety; and though you will reverence her in her seriousness, you will know her best by her smile."—"Political Economy of Art" (1857), pp. 10-13.¹

[From "The Times," October 24, 1882.]

OAK SILKWORMS.

To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR: In your excellent article of October 17, on possible substitutes for cotton, you say "it is very doubtful whether we could introduce the silkworm with profit." The silkworm of the mulberry tree, indeed, requires a warmer climate than ours, but has attention yet been directed to the silkworm of the oak? A day or two ago a physician of European reputation, Dr. L. A. Gosse, was speaking to me of the experiments recently made in France in its acclimatization. He stated to me that the only real difficulty was temporary—namely, in the importation of the eggs, which are prematurely hatched as they are brought through warm latitudes. A few only have reached Europe, and their multiplication is slow, but once let them be obtained in quantity and the stripping of an oak coppice is both robe and revenue. The silk is stronger than that of the mulberry tree, and the stuff woven of it more healthy than cotton stuffs for the wearer; it also wears twice as long. This is Dr. Gosse's report—likely to be a trustworthy one—at all events, it seems to me worth sending you.

I remain your obedient servant,

J. RUSKIN.

GENEVA, Oct. 20th.

¹ See *A Joy for Ever* (1880), pp. 7-9.

VI.—LITERARY CRITICISM.

[From "The World," June 9, 1875.]

THE PUBLICATION OF BOOKS.¹CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,
June 6, 1875.*To the Editor of "The World."*

SIR: I am very grateful for the attention and candor with which you have noticed my effort to introduce a new method of publishing.

Will you allow me to explain one or two points in which I

¹ This letter refers to an article on Mr. Ruskin's peculiar method of publication which appeared in the *World* of May 26, 1875. It was entitled "Ruskin to the Rescue," and with the criticism to which Mr. Ruskin alludes, strongly approved the idea of some reform being attempted in the matter of the publication of books. Mr. Ruskin began the still-continued method of publishing his works in 1871; and the following advertisement, inserted in the earlier copies of the first book thus published—*Sesame and Lilies*—will give the reader further information on the matter.

"It has long been in my mind to make some small beginning of resistance to the existing system of irregular discount in the bookselling trade—not in hostility to booksellers, but, as I think they will find eventually, with a just regard to their interest, as well as to that of authors. Every volume of this series of my collected works will be sold to the trade without any discount or allowance on quantity, at such a fixed price as will allow both author and publisher a moderate profit on each volume. It will be sold to the trade only; who can then fix such further profit on it as they deem fitting, for retail.

"Every volume will be clearly printed, and thoroughly well bound: on such conditions the price to the public, allowing full profit to the retailer, may sometimes reach, but ought never to exceed, half a guinea, nor do I wish it to be less. I will fully state my reasons for this procedure in the June number of *Fors Clavigera*.

"The price of this first volume to the trade is seven shillings."

In subsequent similar notices, some parts of this plan, especially as regarded purchasers and price, were altered; the trade not accepting the offer of sale to them only, and the "trouble and difficulty of revising text and preparing plates" proving much greater than Mr. Ruskin had expected.

am generally misunderstood? I meant to have asked your leave to do so at some length, but have been entirely busy, and can only say, respecting two of your questions, what in my own mind are the answers.

I. "How many authors are strong enough to do without advertisements?"

None: while advertisement is the practice. But let it become the fashion to announce books once for all in a monthly circular (publisher's, for instance), and the public will simply refer to that for all they want to know. Such advertisement I use now, and always would.

II. "Why has he determined to be his own publisher?"

I wish entirely to resist the practice of writing for money early in life. I think an author's business requires as much training as a musician's, and that, as soon as he can write really well, there would always, for a man of worth and sense, be found capital enough to enable him to be able to print, say, a hundred pages of his careful work; which, if the public were pleased with, they would soon enable him to print more. I do not think young men should rush into print, nor old ones modify their books to please publishers.

III. And it seems to me, considering that the existing excellent books in the world would—if they were heaped together in great towns—overtop their cathedrals, that at *any* age a man should think long before he invites his neighbors to listen to *his* sayings on any subject whatever.

What I do, therefore, is done only in the conviction, foolish, egotistic, whatever you like to call it, but firm, that I am writing what is needful and useful for my fellow-creatures; that if it is so, they will in due time discover it, and that before due time I do not want it discovered. And it seems to me that no sound scholar or true well-wisher to the people about him would write in any other temper. I mean to be paid for my work, if it is worth payment. Not otherwise. And it seems to me my mode of publication is the proper method of ascertaining that fact. I had much more to say, but have no more time, and am, sir, very respectfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

[From "The Pall Mall Gazette," January 11, 1875.]

A MISTAKEN REVIEW.¹

To the Editor of "The Pall Mall Gazette."

SIR: The excellent letters and notes which have recently appeared in your columns on the subject of reviewing lead me to think that you will give me space for the statement of one or two things which I believe it is right the public should know respecting the review which appeared in the *Examiner* of the 2d of this month (but which I did not see till yesterday), by Mr. W. B. Scott, of Mr. St. J. Tyrwhitt's "Letters on Landscape Art."

1. Mr. Scott is one of the rather numerous class of artists of whose works I have never taken any public notice, and who attribute my silence to my inherent stupidity of disposition.

2. Mr. Scott is also one of the more limited and peculiarly unfortunate class of artists who suppose themselves to have great native genius, dislike being told to learn perspective, and prefer the first volume of "Modern Painters," which praises many third-rate painters, and teaches none, to the following volumes, which praise none but good painters, and sometimes admit the weakness of advising bad ones.

3. My first acquaintance with Mr. Scott was at the house of a gentleman whose interior walls he was decorating with historic frescos, and whose patronage I (rightly or wrongly) imagined at that time to be of importance to him. I was then more good-natured and less conscientious than I am now, and my host and hostess attached weight to my opinions. I said

¹ Of this review nothing need be said beyond what is stated in this letter. The full title of the book which it so harshly treated is *Our Sketching Club. Letters and Studies on Landscape Art.* By the Rev. R. St. John Tyrwhitt, M.A. With an authorized reproduction of the lessons and woodcuts in Professor Ruskin's *Elements of Drawing*. Macmillan, 1874. The "letters and notes" refer especially to one signed "K" in the *Gazette* of January 1, and another signed "A Young Author" in that of January 4. The principal complaint of both these letters was that reviewers seldom master, and sometimes do not even read the books they criticise.

all the good I truly could of the frescos, and no harm ; painted a corn-cockle on the walls myself, in reverent subordination to them ; got out of the house as soon afterwards as I could, and never since sought Mr. Scott's acquaintance further (though, to my regret, he was once photographed in the same plate with Mr. Rossetti and me). Mr. Scott is an honest man, and naturally thinks me a hypocrite and turncoat as well as a fool.

4. The honestest man in writing a review is apt sometimes to give obscure statements of facts which ought to have been clearly stated to make the review entirely fair. Permit me to state in very few words those which I think the review in question does not clearly represent. My "*Elements of Drawing*" were out of print, and sometimes asked for ; I wished to rewrite them, but had not time, and knew that my friend and pupil, Mr. Tyrrwhitt, was better acquainted than I myself with some processes of water-color sketching, and was perfectly acquainted with and heartily acceptant of the principles which I have taught to be essential in all art. I knew he could write, and I therefore asked him to write, a book of his own to take the place of the "*Elements*," and authorized him to make arrangements with my former publisher for my wood-blocks, mostly drawn on the wood by myself.

The book is his own, not mine, else it would have been published as mine, not his. I have not read it all, and do not answer for it all. But when I wrote the "*Elements*" I believed conscientiously that book of mine to be the best then attainable by the public on the subject of elementary drawing. I think Mr. Tyrrwhitt's a better book, know it to be a more interesting one, and believe it to be, in like manner, the best now attainable by the British public on elementary practice of art.

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, Jan. 10.

[From "The Pall Mall Gazette," January 19, 1875.]

THE POSITION OF CRITICS.

To the Editor of "*The Pall Mall Gazette*."

SIR: I see you are writing of criticism;¹ some of your readers may, perhaps, be interested in hearing the notions of a man who has dabbled in it a good many years. I believe, in a word, that criticism is as impertinent in the world as it is in a drawing-room. In a kindly and well-bred company, if anybody tries to please them, they try to be pleased; if anybody tries to astonish them, they have the courtesy to be astonished; if people become tiresome, they ask somebody else to play, or sing, or what not, but they don't criticise. For the rest, a bad critic is probably the most mischievous person in the world (Swift's Goddess of Criticism in the "*Tale of a Tub*" seems what need be represented, on that subject²), and a good one the most helpless and unhappy: the more he knows, the less he is trusted, and it is too likely he may become morose in his unacknowledged power. A good executant, in any art, gives pleasure to multitudes, and breathes an atmosphere of praise, but a strong critic is every man's adversary—men feel that he knows their foibles, and cannot conceive that he knows more. His praise, to be acceptable, must be always unqualified; his equity is an offence instead of a virtue; and the art of correction, which he has learned so laboriously, only fills his hearers with disgust.

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, Jan. 18.

¹ Since the correspondence already mentioned, the Gazette of January 14 and 18 had contained two long letters on the subject from "A Reviewer."

² The Goddess of Criticism, with Ignorance and Pride for her parents, Opinion for her sister, and for her children Noise and Impudence, Dulness and Vanity, Positiveness, Pedantry, and Ill-manners, is described in the *Battle of the Books*—the paper which follows, and is a companion to the *Tale of a Tub*.

[From "The Critic," October 27, 1860.]

COVENTRY PATMORE'S "FAITHFUL FOR EVER."

To the Editor of "*The Critic*."

SIR: I do not doubt, from what I have observed of the general tone of the criticisms in your columns, that, in candor and courtesy, you will allow me to enter protest, bearing such worth as private opinion may, against the estimate expressed in your last number of the merits of Mr. C. Patmore's new poem.¹ It seems to me that you have read it hastily; and that you have taken such view of it as on a first reading almost every reader of good but impatient judgment would be but too apt to concur with you in adopting—one, nevertheless, which, if you examine the poem with care, you will, I think, both for your readers' sake and Mr. Patmore's, regret having expressed so decidedly.

The poem is, to the best of my perception and belief, a singularly perfect piece of art; containing, as all good art does, many very curious shortcomings (to appearance), and places of rest, or of dead color, or of intended harshness, which, if they are seen or quoted without the parts of the piece to which they relate, are of course absurd enough, precisely as the discords in a fine piece of music would be if you played them without their resolutions. You have quoted separately Mr. Patmore's discords; you might by the same system of examination have made Mozart or Mendelssohn appear to be no musicians, as you have probably convinced your quick readers that Mr. Patmore is no poet.

I will not beg of you so much space as would be necessary to analyze the poem, but I hope you will let me—once for all—protest against the method of criticism which assumes that entire familiarity and simplicity in certain portions of a great work destroy its dignity. Simple things ought to be simply said, and truly poetical diction is nothing more nor less than right diction; the incident being itself poetical or not, accord-

¹ The tone of the criticism is sufficiently explained in this letter.

ing to its relations and the feelings which it is intended to manifest—not according to its own nature merely. To take a single instance out of Homer bearing on that same simple household work which you are so shocked at Mr. Patmore's taking notice of, Homer describes the business of a family washing, when it comes into his poem, in the most accurate terms he can find. "They took the clothes in their hands ; and poured on the clean water ; and trod them in trenches thoroughly, trying who could do it best ; and when they had washed them and got off all the dirt, they spread them out on the sea-beach, where the sea had blanched the shingle cleanest."¹

These are the terms in which the *great* poet explains the matter. The less poet—or, rather, man of modern wit and

¹ See Homer, *Odyssey*, vi. 90.

Εἴματα χερσὶν ἔλοντο καὶ ἐσφόρεον μέλαν ὕδωρ,
 Στεῖβον δ' ἐν βόθροισι δοῶς ἔριδα προφέρουσαι.
 Αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πλύναν τε κυδερὰν τε ῥύπα πάντα,
 Ἐξείης πέτασαν παρὰ δῖν' ἁλὸς, ἥχι μάλιστα
 Λαίγγας ποτὶ χέρσον ἀποπλύνεσκε δάλασσα.

The verse translation of this passage given in the letter is from Pope's *Odyssey*.

The lines in *Faithful for Ever*, particularly alluded to as having been condemned by the "Critic," were those here italicized in the following passage :

"For your sake I am glad to hear
 You sail so soon. *I send you, Dear,*
A trifling present ; and will supply
Your Salisbury costs. You have to buy
Almost an outfit for this cruise !
But many are good enough to use

Again, among the things you send
To give away. My maid shall mend
And let you have them back. Adieu !
 Tell me of all you see and do.
 I know, thank God, what'er it be,
 'Twill need no veil 'twixt you and me."

(*Faithful for Ever*, p. 17, II. "Mrs. Graham to Frederick," her sailor son.)

breeding, *without* superior poetical power—thus puts the affair into dignified language :

Then emulous the royal robes they lave,
And plunge the vestures in the cleansing wave.
(The vestures cleansed o'erspread the shelly sand,
Their snowy lustre whitens all the strand.)

Now, to my mind, Homer's language is by far the most poetical of the two—is, in fact, the only poetical language possible in the matter. Whether it was desirable to give any account of this, or anything else, depends wholly on the relation of the passage to the rest of the poem, and you could only show Mr. Patmore's glance into the servant's room to be ridiculous by proving the mother's mind, which it illustrates, to be ridiculous. Similarly, if you were to take one of Mr. George Richmond's perfectest modern portraits, and give a little separate engraving of a bit of the neck-tie or coat-lappet, you might easily demonstrate a very prosaic character either in the rib-and-end or the button-hole. But the only real question respecting them is their relation to the face, and the degree in which they help to express the character of the wearer. What the real relations of the parts are in the poem in question only a thoughtful and sensitive reader will discover. The poem is not meant for a song, or calculated for an hour's amusement ; it is, as I said, to the best of my belief, a finished and tender work of very noble art. Whatever on this head may be the final judgment of the public, I am bound, for my own part, to express my obligation to Mr. Patmore, as one of my severest models and tutors in use of English, and my respect for him as one of the truest and tenderest thinkers who have ever illustrated the most important, because commonest, states of noble human life.¹

I remain, Sir, yours, etc.,

DENMARK HILL.

J. RUSKIN.

¹ See *Sesame and Lilies* (Ruskin's Works, vol. i.), p. 89, note. "Coventry Patmore. You cannot read him too often or too carefully ; as far as I know he is the only living poet who always strengthens and purifies ; the others sometimes darken, and nearly always depress and discourage, the imagination they deeply seize."

[From "The Asiatic," May 23, 1871.]

"THE QUEEN OF THE AIR."

To the Editor of "*The Asiatic*."

SIR: I am obliged and flattered by the tone of your article on my "Queen of the Air" in your last number, but not at all by the substance of it; and it so much misinterprets my attempt in that book that I will ask your leave to correct it in main points.¹ The "Queen of the Air" was written to show, not what could be fancied, but what was felt and meant, in the myth of Athena. Every British sailor knows that Neptune is the god of the sea. He does *not* know that Athena is the goddess of the air; I doubt if many of our school-boys know it—I doubt even if many of our school-masters know it; and I believe the evidence of it given in the "Queen of the Air" to be the first clear and connected approximate proof of it which has yet been rendered by scientific mythology, properly so called.

You say, "I have not attempted to explain all mythology." I wonder what you would have said of me if I *had*? I only know a little piece of it here and there, just as I know a crag of alp or a bend of river; and even what I know could not be put into a small octavo volume. Nevertheless, I should have had another such out by this time on the Apolline Myths, and, perhaps, one on the Earth-Gods, but for my Oxford work; and shall at all events have a little more to say on the matter than I have yet said—and much need there is—when all that has yet been done by "scientific" mythology ends in the assertion made by your reviewer, that "mythology is useful mainly as a storehouse for poets, and for literary men in want of some simile or metaphor to produce a striking effect."

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

May 18, 1871.

JOHN RUSKIN.

¹ The article was entitled *Aryan Mythology: Second Notice*, the first notice having been a review of Mr. Gladstone's *Juventus Mundi*, and of some other mythological works. (See the *Asiatic*, April 25 and May 16, 1871.) The nature of the praise and criticism of the article may be gathered from this letter.

[From "The Morning Chronicle," January 20, 1855. (Reprinted in "The Evening Journal," January 22.)]

*THE ANIMALS OF SCRIPTURE: A REVIEW.*¹

Among the various illustrated works which usually grace the beginning of the year, has appeared one which, though of graver and less attractive character than its companions, is likely to occupy a more permanent place on the library shelves. We allude to "Illustrations of Scripture, by an Animal Painter," a work which, whatever its faults or weaknesses, shows at least a singular power of giving reality and interest to scenes which are apt to be but feebly, if at all, brought before the mental vision, in consequence of our familiarity with the words which describe them. The idea of the work is itself sufficiently original. The animals are throughout principal, and the pathos or moral of the passage to be illustrated is developed from its apparently subordinate part in it. Thus the luxury and idolatry of the reign of Solomon are hinted behind a group of "apes and peacocks;" the Deluge is subordinate to the dove; and the healing of the lunatic at Genesareth to the destruction of the herd of swine.

In general, to approach an object from a new point of view is to place it in a clearer light, and perhaps the very strangeness of the treatment in some cases renders the subject more impressive than it could have been made by any more regular method of conception. But, at all events, supposing the studies of the artist to have been chiefly directed to animals, and her power to lie principally in seizing their character, she is to be thanked for filling her sketches of the inferior creatures with so much depth of meaning, and rendering the delineation even of an ape, or a swallow, suggestive of the most solemn trains of thought.

¹ The full title of the book here reviewed by Mr. Ruskin, and long since out of print, was *Twenty Photographs; being illustrations of Scripture. By an Animal Painter; with Notes by a Naturalist. Imperial 4to. Edinburgh: Constable, 1854.* The work was, however, reprinted, with engravings of the photographs, in *Good Words* for 1861.

As so suggestive, without pretence or formalism, these drawings deserve a place of peculiar honor in the libraries of the young, while there are also some qualities in them which fit them for companionship with more elaborate works of art. The subject of "Lazarus" is treated with a courage and tenderness which say much for the painter's imagination, and more for her heart; and the waste of waters above which the raven hovers is expressed, though rudely, yet in a way which tells of many an hour spent in watching the play of the evening light upon the movement of the wearied sea. It is true that most of the compositions are weakened by a very visible contempt, if not ignorance, of the laws which regulate the harmonies of shade, as well as by a painful deficiency in the drawing. Still there is a life and sincerity in them which are among the rarest qualities in art; and one characteristic, very remarkable in the works of a person described in the text (we doubt not, much against her will) as an "accomplished lady"—we mean the peculiar tendency to conceptions of fearfulness, or horror, rather than of beauty. The camel, for instance, might, we should have thought, as easily, and to many persons much more pleasingly, have illustrated the meeting of Rebekah with the servant of Abraham, as the desolation of Rabbah; and the dog might as gracefully have been brought forward to remind us of the words of the Syro-Phœnician woman, as to increase the horror of the death of Jezebel. There are curious evidences of a similar disposition in some of the other plates; and while it appears to us indicative of the strength of a mind of no common order, we would caution the fair artist against permitting it to appear too frequently. It renders the series of drawings in some degree repulsive to many persons, and even by those who can sympathize with it might sometimes be suspected of having its root in a sublime kind of affectation.

We have spoken of these studies as drawings. They are, in fact, as good, being photographic fac-similes of the original sketches. The text is copious, and useful as an elucidation of the natural history of Scripture.

[From "The Builder," December 9, 1854.]

"LIMNER" AND ILLUMINATION.¹

To the Editor of "The Builder."

I do not usually answer objections to my written statements, otherwise I should waste my life in idle controversy; but as what I say to the workmen at the Architectural Museum is necessarily brief, and in its words, though not in its substance, unconsidered, I will answer, if you will permit me, any questions or cavils which you may think worthy of admission into your columns on the subject of these lectures.

I do not know if the Cambridge correspondent, whose letter you inserted last week, is more zealous for the honor of Cary, or anxious to detect me in a mistake. If the former, he will find if he take the trouble to look at the note in the 264th page of the second volume of the "Stones of Venice," that Cary's reputation is not likely to suffer at my hands.² But

¹ In his lecture on "the distinction between illumination and painting," being the first of a series on Decorative Color delivered at the Architectural Museum, Cannon Street, Westminster, Mr. Ruskin is reported (Builder, Nov. 25, 1854) to have said, "The line which is given by Cary, 'which they of Paris call the limner's skill,' is not properly translated. The word which in the original is '*illuminare*,' does not mean the limner's art, but the art of the illuminator—the writer and illuminator of books." In criticism of this remark, "M. A.," writing to the Builder from Cambridge, defended Cary's translation by referring to Johnson's dictionary to show that "limner" was after all corrupted from "enlumineur," i.e., "a decorator of books with initial pictures." His letter concluded by remarking upon another of Mr. Ruskin's statements in the same lecture, namely, that "Black letter is not really illegible, it is only that we are not accustomed to it. . . . The fact is, no kind of character is really illegible. If you wish to see real illegibility, go to the Houses of Parliament and look at the inscriptions there!"

The present letter was written in reply to "M. A.," from whom the latter portion of it elicited a further letter, together with one from "Vindex," in defence of Sir Charles Barry and the Houses of Parliament (see the Builder, Dec. 16, 1854).

² "It is generally better to read ten lines of any poet in the original language, however painfully, than ten cantos of a translation. But an exception may be made in favor of Cary's 'Dante,' If no poet ever was liable to lose more in translation, none was ever so carefully trans-

the translation in the instance quoted is inadmissible. It does not matter in the least whence the word "limner" is derived. I did not know when I found fault with it that it was a corruption of "illuminator," but I knew perfectly that it did not in the existing state of the English language *mean* "illuminator." No one talks of "limning a missal," or of a "limned missal." The word is now universally understood as signifying a painter or draughtsman in the ordinary sense, and cannot be accepted as a *translation* of the phrase of which it is a *corruption*.

Touching the last clause of the letter, I should have thought that a master of arts of Cambridge might have had wit enough to comprehend that characters may be illegible by being far off, as well as by being ill-shaped; and that it is not less difficult to read what is too small to be seen than what is too strange to be understood. The inscriptions on the Houses of Parliament are illegible, not because they are in black letters, but because, like all the rest of the work on that, I suppose the most effeminate and effectless heap of stones ever raised by man, they are utterly unfit for their position.

J. RUSKIN.

[From the "Transactions of the New Shakspeare Society" for 187-80, pp. 409-12.]

NOTES ON A WORD IN SHAKESPEARE.¹

I.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE.

MY DEAR FURNIVALL: Of course, in any great writer's word, the question is far less what the word came from, than where

lated; and I hardly know whether most to admire the rigid fidelity, or the sweet and solemn harmony, of Cary's verse," etc. See the note to the Stones of Venice, at the above-named page.

¹ This and the next letter were written in answer to Mr. Furnivall, who, upon being questioned what appearance in the clouds was intended by the word "fret" in the above passage, referred the point to Mr. Ruskin, whose answers were subsequently read at the forty-fifth meeting of the Society, Oct. 11, 1878.

"And yon gray lines

That fret the clouds are messengers of day."

JULIUS CÆSAR, II. i. 103-4.

it has come to. *Fret* means all manner of things in that place; primarily, the rippling of clouds—as sea by wind; secondarily, the breaking it asunder for light to come through. It implies a certain degree of vexation—some dissolution—much *order*, and extreme beauty. I have myself used this word substantively, to express the rippled edge of a wing-feather. In architecture and jewellery it means simply roughening in a decorative manner.*

Ever affectionately yours,
J. RUSKIN.

NOTES ON A WORD IN SHAKESPEARE.

II.

EDINBURGH, 29th Sept., 1878.

DEAR FURNIVALL: Your kind letter comes to me here, and I must answer on this paper, for, if that bit of note is really of any use to you, you must please add this word or two more, in printing, as it wouldn't do to let it be such a mere fret on the vault of its subject. You say not one man in 150 knows what the line means: my dear Furnivall, not one man in 15,000, in the 19th century, knows, or even can know, what *any* line—or any *word* means, used by a great writer. For most words stand for things that are seen, or things that are thought of; and in the 19th century there is certainly not one man in 15,000 who ever looks at anything, and not one in 15,000,000 capable of a thought. Take the intelligence of this word in this line for example—the root of the whole matter is, first, that the reader should have seen what he has often heard of, but probably not seen twice in his life—"Daybreak." Next, it is needful he should think what "break" means in that word—what is broken, namely, and by what. That is to say, the cloud of night is Broken up, as a city is broken up (Jeru-

* In modern English "chasing" has got confused with it, but it should be separated again.

saalem, when Zedekiah fled), as a school breaks up, as a constitution, or a ship, is broken up; in every case with a not inconsiderable change of idea and addition to the central word. This breaking up is done by the Day, which breaks—*out*, as a man breaks, or bursts *out*, from his restraint in a passion; breaks *down* in tears; or breaks *in*, as from heaven to earth—with a breach in the cloud-wall of it; or breaks *out*, with a sense of *outward*—as the sun—out and out, farther and farther, after rain. Well; next, the thing that the day breaks up is partly a garment, *rent*, more than broken; a *mantle*, the day itself “in russet mantle clad”—the blanket of the dark, *torn* to be peeped through—whereon instantly you get into a whole host of new ideas; *fretting* as a moth *frets* a garment; unravelling at the edge, afterwards;—thence you get into *fringe*, which is an entirely double word, meaning partly a thing that guards, and partly a thing that is worn away on the ground; the French *Frangé* has, I believe, a reminiscence of *φράσσω* in it—our “fringe” runs partly toward *frico* and friction—both are essentially connected with *frango*, and the fringe of “breakers” at the shores of all seas, and the breaking of the ripples and foam all over them—but this is wholly different in a northern mind, which has only seen the sea

Break, break, break, on its *cold* gray stones,—

and a southern, which has seen a hot sea on hot sand break into lightning of phosphor flame—half a mile of fire in an instant—following in time, like the flash of minute-guns. Then come the great new ideas of order and time, and

I did but tell her she mistook her *frets*,
And bowed her hand, etc.,

and so the timely succession of either ball, flower, or dentil, in architecture: but this, again, going off to a totally different and still lovely idea, the main one in the word *aurifrigium*—which rooted once in *aurifer*, went on in Etruscan work, followed in Florence into a much closer connection with *frigidus*—their style being always in *frosted* gold (see the dew on a

cabbage-leaf or, better, on a gray lichen, in early sunshine)—going back, nobody knows how far, but to the Temple of the Dew of Athens, and gold of Mycenæ, anyhow ; and in Etruria to the Deluge, I suppose. Well, then, the notion of the music of morning comes in—with strings of lyre (or *frets* of Katharine's instrument, whatever it was) and stops of various *quills* ; which gets us into another group beginning with *plectrum*, going aside again into *plico* and *plight*, and Milton's

“ Play in the plighted clouds ”

(the quills on the fretful porcupine are all thought of, first, in their piped complexity like rushes, *before* the standing up in ill-temper), and so on into the *plight* of folded drapery, and round again to our blanket. I think that's enough to sketch out the compass of the word. Of course the real power of it in any place depends on the writer's grasp of it, and use of the facet he wants to cut with.

[From “The Theatre,” March 1880, p. 169.]

“ THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.”¹

6th Feb., 1880.

I HAVE no doubt that whatever Mr. Irving has stated that I said, I *did* say. But in personal address to an artist, to whom

¹ The circumstances connected with the present letter, or rather extract from one, are as follows: After witnessing the performance of *The Merchant of Venice* at the Lyceum Theatre, Mr. Ruskin had some conversation with Mr. Irving on the subject. In the Theatre of January 1880—p. 68—appeared a paragraph which stated that at the interview named Mr. Ruskin had declared Mr. Irving's “Shylock” to be “noble, tender, and true,” and it is to that statement that the present letter, which appeared in the March number of the Theatre, relates. With reference to the letter privately addressed to Mr. Irving, the Theatre of April (p. 249) had a note to the effect that Mr. Irving had, for excellent and commendable reasons, preferred it not being made public. For a full statement of Mr. Ruskin's views of *The Merchant of Venice*, see *Munera Pulveris*, p. 102.

one is introduced for the first time, one does not usually say *all* that may be in one's mind. And if expressions, limited, if not even somewhat exaggerated, by courtesy, be afterwards quoted as a total and carefully-expressed criticism, the general reader will be—or may be easily—much misled. I did and *do* much admire Mr. Irving's own acting of Shylock. But I entirely dissent (and indignantly as well as entirely) from his general reading and treatment of the play. And I think that a modern audience will *invariably* be not only wrong, but diametrically and with polar accuracy opposite to, the real view of any great author in the moulding of his work.

So far as I could in kindness venture, I expressed my feelings to that effect, in a letter which I wrote to Mr. Irving on the day after I saw the play; and I should be sincerely obliged to him, under the existing circumstances, if he would publish THE WHOLE of that letter.

RECITATIONS.

SHEFFIELD, 16th February, 1880.

MY DEAR SIR :¹ I am most happy to assure you, in reply to your interesting letter of the 12th, that I heard your daughters' recitations in London last autumn, with quite unmingled pleasure and the sincerest admiration—nor merely that, but with grave change in my opinions of the general value of recitations as a means of popular instruction. Usually, I like better to hear beautiful poetry read quietly than recited with action. But I felt, in hearing Shelley's "Cloud" recited (I think it was by Miss Josephine) that I also was "one of the people," and understood the poem better than ever before, though I am by way of knowing something about clouds, too. I also know the "Jackdaw of Rheims" pretty nearly by heart;

¹ This letter was addressed to Mr. R. T. Webbing, by whom it was afterwards printed as a testimonial of the interest and success of his daughters' recitations. It was reprinted in the *Daily News* (Feb. 18, 1880).

but I would gladly come to London straightway, had I the time, to hear Miss Peggy speak it again. And—in fine—I have not seen any public entertainment—for many a long year—at once so sweet, so innocent, and so helpful, as that which your children can give to all the gentle and simple in mind and heart.—Believe me, my dear Sir, faithfully, and with all felicitation, yours,

J. RUSKIN.

APPENDIX.

[From the "Testimonials" of W. C. Bennett, LL.D. 1871 ; p. 22.]

LETTER TO W. C. BENNETT, LL.D.¹

HERNE HILL, DULWICH, *December 28th*, 1852.

DEAR MR. BENNETT : I hope this line will arrive in time to wish you and yours a happy New Year, and to assure you of the great pleasure I had in receiving your poems from you, and of the continual pleasure I shall have in possessing them. I deferred writing to you in order that I might tell you how I liked those which were new to me, but Christmas, and certain little "pattering pairs of restless shoes" which have somehow or another got into the house in his train, have hitherto prevented me from settling myself for a quiet read. In fact, I am terribly afraid of being quite turned upside down when I do, so as to lose my own identity, for you have already *nearly* made me like babies, and I see an ode further on to another antipathy of mine—the only one I have in the kingdom of flowers—the chrysanthemum. However, I am sure you will be well pleased if you can cure me of all *dislikes*. I should write to you now more cheerfully, but that I am anxious for

¹ The present letter is from the Testimonials of W. C. Bennett, LL.D., Candidate for the Clerkship of the London School Board. The pamphlet consists of "letters from distinguished men of the time," and includes some from Mr. Carlyle, Mr. Tennyson, Mr. Browning, Charles Dickens, and others. Mr. Ruskin's letter was originally addressed to Mr. Bennett in thanks for a copy of his *Poems* (Chapman and Hall, 1850). The poems specially alluded to are "Toddling May" (from which Mr. Ruskin quotes), "Baby May," and another, "To the Chrysanthemum." The book is dedicated to Miss Mitford.

the person who, of all I know, has fewest dislikes and warmest likings—for Miss Mitford. I trust she is better, and that she may be spared for many years to come. I don't know if England has such another warm heart.

I hope I may have the pleasure of seeing you here in case your occasions should at any time bring you to London, and

I remain, with much respect, most truly yours,

J. RUSKIN.

[From the "Memoir of Thomas Guthrie, D.D." Vol. II. pp. 321-2 (1875).]

LETTER TO DR. GUTHRIE.¹

Saturday, 26th, 1853.

I FOUND a little difficulty in writing the words on the first page, wondering whether you would think the "affectionate" misused or insincere. But I made up my mind at last to write what I felt; believing that you must be accustomed to people's getting very seriously and truly attached to you, almost at first sight, and therefore would believe me.

You asked me, the other evening, some kind questions about my father. He was an Edinburgh boy, and in answer to some account by me of the pleasure I had had in hearing you, and the privilege of knowing you, as also of your exertions in the cause of the Edinburgh poor, he desires to send you the enclosed, to be applied by you in such manner as you may think fittest for the good of his native city. I have added slightly to my father's trust. I wish I could have done so more largely, but my profession of fault-finding with the world in general is not a lucrative one.

Always respectfully and affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

¹ This letter accompanied the gift of a copy of *The Stones of Venice*, sent to Dr. Guthrie by Mr. Ruskin, who, while residing in Edinburgh during the winter of 1853, "was to be found each Sunday afternoon in St. John's Free Church."

[From "The Times," March 23, 1859.]

THE SALE OF MR. WINDUS' PICTURES.

To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR: Will you oblige me by correcting an error in your account given this morning of the sale of Mr. Windus' pictures on Saturday, in which the purchase of Mr. Millais's picture "Pot Pourri" is attributed to me? I neither purchased Mr. Millais's picture, nor any other picture at that sale.

I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, *March 28.*

[From "The Pall Mall Gazette," March 1, 1867.]

AT THE PLAY.

To the Editor of "The Pall Mall Gazette."

SIR: I am writing a series of private letters on matters of political economy to a working man in Newcastle, without objecting to his printing them, but writing just as I should if they were for his eye only. I necessarily take copies of them for reference, and the one I sent him last Monday seems to me not unlikely to interest some of your readers who care about modern drama. So I send you the copy of it to use if you like.¹

Truly yours,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, *Feb. 28, 1867.*

¹ The collection of pictures belonging to Mr. B. G. Windus was sold by Messrs. Christie and Manson on March 26, 1859.

² The enclosed letter is Letter V. of Time and Tide.

[From "The Daily Telegraph," January 22, 1868.]

AN OBJECT OF CHARITY.¹

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph."

SIR: Except in "Gil Blas," I never read of anything As-træan on the earth so perfect as the story in your fourth article to-day.

I send you a check for the Chancellor. If 40, in legal terms, means 400, you must explain the further requirements to your impulsive public.

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, S., Jan. 21, 1868.

EXCUSES FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

DENMARK HILL, S.,
2d February, 1868.

I am about to enter on some work which cannot be well done or even approximately well, unless without interruption, and it would be desirable for me, were it in my power, to leave home for some time, and carry out my undertaking in seclusion. But as my materials are partly in London, I cannot do this;

¹The Daily Telegraph of January 21, 1868, contained a leading article upon the following facts. It appeared that a girl, named Matilda Griggs, had been nearly murdered by her seducer, who, after stabbing her in no less than thirteen different places, had then left her for dead. She had, however, still strength enough to crawl into a field close by, and there swooned. The assistance that she met with in this plight was of a rare kind. Two calves came up to her, and disposing themselves on either side of her bleeding body, thus kept her warm and partly sheltered from cold and rain. Temporarily preserved, the girl eventually recovered, and entered into recognizances, under the sum of forty pounds, to prosecute her murderous lover. But "she loved much," and, failing to prosecute, forfeited her recognizances, and was imprisoned by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for her debt. "Pity this poor debtor," wrote the Daily Telegraph, and in the next day's issue appeared the above letter, probably not intended for the publication accorded to it.

so that my only alternative is to ask you to think of me as if actually absent from England, and not to be displeased though I must decline all correspondence. And I pray you to trust my assurance that, whatever reasons I may have for so uncouth behavior, none of them are inconsistent with the respect and regard in which I remain,

Faithfully yours,¹

[From "The Liverpool Weekly Albion," November 9, 1872.]

*LETTER TO THE AUTHOR OF A REVIEW.**

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,
Wednesday, 30th Oct.

[MY DEAR] SIR: I was on the point of writing to the Editor of *The Albion* to ask the name of the author of that article. Of course, one likes praise [and I'm so glad of it that I can take a great many kinds], but I never got any [that] I liked so much before, because, as far as I [can] remember nobody ever noticed

¹ The above letter, printed as a circular, was at one time used by Mr. Ruskin in reply to part of his large correspondence. Some few copies had the date printed on them as above. The following is a similar but more recent excuse, printed at the end of the last "list of works" issued (March, 1880) by Mr. Ruskin's publisher:

Mr. Ruskin has always hitherto found his correspondents under the impression that, when he is able for average literary work, he can also answer any quantity of letters. He most respectfully and sorrowfully must pray them to observe, that it is precisely when he is in most active general occupation that he can answer fewest private letters; and this year he proposes to answer—none, except those on St. George's business. There will be enough news of him, for any who care to get them, in the occasional numbers of "Fors."

² The review was the first of three articles entitled "The Discipline of Art and the Votary of Science," published in the *Liverpool Weekly Albion* of November 9, 16, and 23, 1873. The first of them had also appeared previously in the *Liverpool Daily Albion*, and was reprinted with the present letter in the weekly issue of Nov. 9. The aim of the articles was partly to show how the question "What is Art?" involved a second and deeper inquiry, "What is Man?" The words bracketed here were omitted in the *Albion*, but occur in the original letter, for access to which I have to thank the writer of the articles.

or allowed for the *range* of work I've had to do, and which really has been dreadfully costly and painful to me, compelling me to leave things just at the point when one's work on them has become secure and delightful, to attack them on another rough side. It is a most painful manner of life, and I never got any credit for it before. But the more I see, the more I feel the necessity of seeing all round, however hastily.

I am entirely grateful for the review and the understanding of me; and I needed some help just now—for I'm at once single-handed and dead—or worse—hearted, and as nearly beaten as I've been in my life.

Always therefore I shall be, for the encouragement at a heavy time,

Very gratefully yours,
(Signed) J. RUSKIN.

[From "The Globe," October 29, 1874.]

AN OXFORD PROTEST.¹

The Slade Professor has tried for five years to please everybody in Oxford by lecturing at any time that might be conveniently subordinate to other dates of study in the University. He finds he has pleased nobody, and must for the future at least make his hour known and consistent. He cannot alter it this term because people sometimes come from a distance and have settled their plans by the hours announced in the *Gazette*, but for many reasons he thinks it right to change the place, and will hereafter lecture in the theatre of the museum.² On Friday the 30th he will not begin till half-past twelve to allow settling time. Afterwards, all his lectures will be at twelve in this and future terms. He feels that if he cannot be granted so much as twelve hours of serious audience in working time

¹ Mr. Ruskin had recently changed the hour of his lectures from two to twelve, and the latter hour clashing with other lectures, some complaints had been made. This "protest" was then issued on the morning of October 29 and reprinted in the *Globe* of the same day.

² Instead of in the drawing schools at the Taylor Gallery.

during the whole Oxford year, he need not in future prepare public lectures at which his pupils need not much regret their non-attendance.

[From "The Standard," August 28, 1877. Reprinted in the "Notes and Correspondence" to "Fors Clavigera," Letter lxxxI., September, 1877, vol. iv., p. 104.]

MR. RUSKIN AND MR. LOWE.

To the Editor of "The Standard."

SIR: My attention has been directed to an article in your columns of the 22d inst., referring to a supposed correspondence between Mr. Lowe and me.¹ Permit me to state that the letter in question is not Mr. Lowe's. The general value of your article as a review of my work and methods of writing will, I trust, rather be enhanced than diminished by the correction, due to Mr. Lowe, of this original error; and the more, that your critic in the course of his review expresses his not unjustifiable conviction that no correspondence between Mr. Lowe and me is possible on any intellectual subject whatever.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
August 24.

[From the List of "Mr. Shepherd's Publications" printed at the end of his "The Bibliography of Dickens," 1880.]

THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF RUSKIN.

I.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON,
Sept. 30, 1878.

DEAR SIR: So far from being distasteful to me, your perfect reckoning up of me not only flatters my vanity extremely, but

¹ The article in question stated that a number of *Fors Clavigera* had been sent to Mr. Lowe, and commented on by him in a letter to Mr. Ruskin. The last words of the article, alluded to above, were as follows: "The world will be made no wiser by any controversy between Mr. Ruskin and Mr. Lowe, for it would be impossible to reduce their figures or facts to a common denominator."

will be in the highest degree useful to myself. But you know so much more about me than I now remember about anything, that I can't find a single thing to correct or add—glancing through at least.

I will not say that you have wasted your time ; but I may at least regret the quantity of trouble the book must have given you, and am, therefore, somewhat ashamedly, but very gratefully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

R. H. SHEPHERD, Esq.

II.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON,
Oct. 23, 1878.

DEAR MR. SHEPHERD : I am very deeply grateful to you, as I am in all duty bound, for this very curious record of myself. It will be of extreme value to me in filling up what gaps I can in this patched coverlid of my life before it is draped over my coffin—if it may be.

I am especially glad to have note of the letters to newspapers, but *most* chiefly to have the good news of so earnest and patient a friend.

Ever gratefully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

[From the "First Annual Report" of the "Ruskin Society" (of the Rose), Manchester, 1880.]

THE SOCIETY OF THE ROSE.¹

"No, indeed, I don't want to discourage the plan you have so kindly and earnestly formed, but I could not easily or decorously promote it myself, could I? But I fully proposed to write you a letter to be read at the first meeting, guarding you especially against an 'ism,' or a possibility of giving occasion for one; and I am exceedingly glad to receive your present letter. Mine was not written because it gave me trouble to think of it, and I can't take trouble now. But

¹ This letter was written early in 1879 to the Secretary *pro tem.* of the Ruskin Society of Manchester, in reply to a request for Mr. Ruskin's views upon the formation of such a Society.

without thinking, I can at once assure you that the taking of the name of St. George *would* give me endless trouble, and cause all manner of mistakes, and perhaps even legal difficulties. We must not have that, please.

"But I think you might with grace and truth take the name of the Society of the Rose—meaning the English wild rose—and that the object of the society would be to promote such English learning and life as can abide where it grows. You see it is the heraldic sign on my books, so that you might still keep pretty close to me.

"Supposing this were thought too far-fetched or sentimental by the promoters of the society, I think the 'More' Society would be a good name, following out the teaching of the Utopia as it is taken up in 'Fors.' I can't write more to-day, but I dare say something else may come into my head, and I'll write again, or you can send me more names for choice."

[From "The Autographic Mirror," December 23 and 30, 1863.]

LETTER TO W. H. HARRISON.¹

DEAR MR. HARRISON: The plate I send is unluckily merely outlined in its principal griffin (it is just being finished), but it may render your six nights' work a little more amusing. I don't want it back.

¹ A facsimile of this letter, from a collection of autographs in the possession of Mr. T. F. Dillon Croker, appeared in the above-named issue of the Autographic Mirror. The subject of the letter will be made clearer by the following passages from Mr. Ruskin's reminiscence of Mr. William Henry Harrison, published in the University Magazine of April, 1878, under the title of "My First Editor."—"1st February, 1878. In seven days more I shall be fifty-nine; which (practically) is all the same as sixty; but being asked by the wife of my dear old friend, W. H. Harrison, to say a few words of our old relations together, I find myself, in spite of all these years, a boy again—partly in the mere thought of, and renewed sympathy with, the cheerful heart of my old literary master, and partly in instinctive terror lest, wherever he is in celestial circles, he should catch me writing bad grammar, or putting wrong stops, and should set the table turning, or the like. . . . Not a book of

Never mind putting "see to quotations," as I always do. And, in the second revise, don't look to all my alterations to tick them off, but merely read straight through the new proof to see if any mistake strikes you. This will be more useful to me than the other.

Most truly yours, with a thousand thanks,
J. RUSKIN.

[From the "Journal of Dramatic Reform," November, 1890.]

DRAMATIC REFORM.¹

I.

MY DEAR SIR : Yes, I began writing something—a year ago, is it?—on your subject, but have lost it, and am now utterly too busy to touch so difficult and so important a subject. I shall come on it, some day, necessarily.

Meantime, the one thing I have to say mainly is that the idea of making money by a theatre, and making it educational at the same time, is *utterly* to be got out of people's heads. You don't make money out of a Ship of the Line, nor should you out of a Church, nor should you out of a College, nor should you out of a Theatre.

Pay your Ship's officers, your Church officers, your College tutors, and your Stage tutors, what will honorably maintain them. Let there be no starring on the Stage boards, more than on the deck, but the *Broadside* well delivered.

mine, for good thirty years, but went, every word of it, under his careful eyes twice over—often also the last revises left to his tender mercy altogether on condition he wouldn't bother me any more.'—The book to which the letter refers may be the *Stones of Venice*, and the plate sent the third (Noble and Ignoble Grotesque), in the last volume of that work ; and if this be so, the letter was probably written from Herne Hill about 1852-3.

¹ This and the following letter were both addressed to Mr. John Stuart Bogg, the Secretary of the Dramatic Reform Association of Manchester. The first was a reply to a request that Mr. Ruskin would, in accordance with an old promise, write something on the subject of the Drama for the Society's journal ; and the second was added by its author on hearing that it was the wish of the Society to publish the first.

And let the English Gentleman consider with himself what *he* has got to teach the people : perhaps then, he may tell the English Actor what *he* has to teach them.

Ever faithfully yours,

(Signed) J. RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, July 30th, 1880.

II.

MY DEAR SIR: I am heartily glad you think my letter may be of some use. I wish it had contained the tenth part of what I wanted to say.

May I ask you at least to add this note to it, to tell how indignant I was, a few days ago, to see the drop-scene (!) of the *Folies* at Paris composed of huge advertisements! The ghastly want of sense of beauty, and endurance of loathsomeness gaining hourly on the people!

They were playing the *Fille du Tambour Major* superbly, for the most part; they gave the introductory convent scene without the least caricature, the Abbess being played by a very beautiful and gracefully-mannered actress, and the whole thing would have been delightful had the mere decorations of the theatre been clean and pretty. To think that all the strength of the world combining in Paris to amuse itself can't have clean box-curtains! or a pretty landscape sketch for a drop scene!—but sits in squalor and dismalness, with bills stuck all over its *rideau*!

I saw *Le Chalet* here last night, in many respects well played and sung, and it is a quite charming little opera in its story, only it requires an actress of extreme refinement for the main part, and everybody last night sang too loud. There is no music of any high quality in it, but the piece is one which, played with such delicacy as almost any clever, *wellbred* girl could put into the heroine's part (if the audiences would look for acting more than voice), *ought* to be extremely delightful to simple persons.

On the other hand, I heard *William Tell* entirely massacred at the great opera-house at Paris. My belief is they scarcely sang a piece of pure Rossini all night, but had fitted in mod-

ern skimble-skamble tunes, and quite unspeakably clumsy and common *ballet*. I scarcely came away in better humor from the mouthed tediousness of *Gerin* at the *Français*, but they took pains with it, and I suppose it pleased a certain class of audience. The *William Tell* could please nobody at heart.

The libretto of *Jean de Neville* is very beautiful, and ought to have new music written for it. Anything so helplessly tuneless as its present music I never heard, except mosquitoes and cicadas.

Ever faithfully yours,

(Signed)

J. RUSKIN.

AMIENS, *October 12th*, 1880.

[From the "Glasgow Herald," October 7, 1880.]

THE LORD RECTORSHIP OF GLASGOW UNIVERSITY.¹

I.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE, *10th June*, 1880.

MY DEAR SIR: I am greatly flattered by your letter, but there are two reasons why I can't stand—the first, that though I believe myself the stanchest Conservative in the British Islands, I hold some opinions, and must soon clearly utter them, concerning both lands and rents, which I fear the Conservative Club would be very far from sanctioning, and think Mr. Bright himself had been their safer choice. The second, that I am not in the least disposed myself to stand in any contest where it is possible that Mr. Bright might beat me.

Are there really no Scottish gentlemen of birth and learning from whom you could choose a Rector worthier than Mr. Bright? and better able than any Southron to rectify what

¹ Of these letters it should be noted that the first was written to the President of the Conservative Club upon his requesting Mr. Ruskin to stand for the Lord Rectorship; the second in answer to a hope that Mr. Ruskin would reconsider the decision he had expressed in his reply; and the third upon the receipt of a letter explaining what the duties of the office were. The fourth letter refers to one which dealt with some reflections made by the Liberal Club upon the former conduct of their opponents.

might be oblique, or hold straight what wasn't yet so, in a Scottish University?

Might I ask the favor of the transmission of a copy of this letter to the Independent Club? It will save me the difficulty of repetition in other terms. And believe me, my dear sir, always the club's and your faithful servant,

(Signed)

J. RUSKIN.

MATT. P. FRASER, Esq.

II.

18th June, 1880.

MY DEAR SIR: I am too tired at this moment (I mean this day or two back) to be able to think. My health may break down any day, and I cannot bear a sense of having to do anything. If you would take me on condition of my residence for a little while with you, and giving a little address to the students after I had seen something of them, I think I could come, but I won't stand ceremonies nor make long speeches, and you really should try to get somebody else.

Ever respectfully yours,

(Signed)

J. RUSKIN.

MATT. P. FRASER, Esq.

III.

24th June, 1880.

MY DEAR SIR: I am grieved at my own vacillation, and fear it is more vanity than sense of duty in which I leave this matter of nomination to your own pleasure. But I had rather err in vanity than in heartlessness, and so will do my best for you if you want me.

Ever respectfully yours,

(Signed)

J. RUSKIN.

IV.

ROUEN, 28th September, 1880.

SIR: I am obliged by your letter, but can absolutely pay no regard to anything said or done by Mr. Bright's Committee beyond requesting my own committees to print for their inspection—or their use—in any way they like, every word of every letter I have written to my supporters, or non-support-

ers, or any other person in Glasgow, so far as such letters may be recoverable.

Faithfully yours,
(Signed) J. RUSKIN.

MATT. P. FRASER, Esq.

v.¹

[From "The Glasgow Herald," October 12, 1880.]

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE.

MY DEAR SIR: What in the devil's name have *you* to do with either Mr. D'Israeli or Mr. Gladstone? You are students at the University, and have no more business with politics than you have with rat-catching.

Had you ever read ten words of mine [with understanding] you would have known that I care no more [either] for Mr. D'Israeli or Mr. Gladstone than for two old bagpipes with the drones going by steam, but that I hate all Liberalism as I do Beelzebub, and that, with Carlyle, I stand, we two alone now in England, for God and the Queen.

Ever faithfully yours,
J. RUSKIN.

ALEX. MITCHELL, Esq., Avoch, by Inverness.

P.S.—You had better, however, ask the Conservatives for a copy of my *entire* letters to them.

¹ Upon the terms of this letter, which was written in answer to a question whether Mr. Ruskin sympathized with Lord Beaconsfield or with Mr. Gladstone, the reader is referred to the Epilogue. The bracketed words were omitted in the Glasgow Herald.

EPILOGUE.

I FIND my immitigable Editor insists on epilogue as well as prologue from his submissive Author ; which would have fretted me a little, since the last letter of the series appears to me a very pretty and comprehensive sum of the matters in the book, had not the day on which, as Fors would have it, I am to write its last line, brought to my mind something of importance which I forgot to say in the preface ; nor will it perhaps be right to leave wholly without explanation the short closing letter to which I have just referred.

It should be observed that it was written to the President of the *Liberal* party of the Glasgow students, in answer to the question which I felt to be wholly irrelevant to the business in hand, and which could not have been answered in anything like official terms with anything short of a forenoon's work. I gave the answer, therefore, in my own terms, not in the least petulant, but chosen to convey as much information as I could in the smallest compass ; and carrying it accurately faceted and polished on the angles.

For instance, I never, under any conditions of provocation or haste, would have said that I hated Liberalism as I did *Mammon*, or *Belial*, or *Moloch*. I chose the milder fiend of Ekron, as the true exponent and patron of Liberty, the God of Flies ; and if my Editor, in final kindness, can refer the reader to the comparison of the House-fly and House-dog, in (he, and not I, must say where) ¹ the letter will have received all the illustration which I am minded to give it. I was only surprised that after its publication, of course never intended,

¹ See *The Queen of the Air*, §§ 148-152 (1874 Ed.).

though never forbidden by me, it passed with so little challenge, and was, on the whole, understood as it was meant.

The more important matter I have to note in closing, is the security given to the conclusions arrived at in many subjects treated of in these letters, in consequence of the breadth of the basis on which the reasoning is founded. The multiplicity of subject, and opposite directions of investigation, which have so often been alleged against me, as if sources of weakness, are in reality, as the multiplied buttresses of the apse of Amiens, as secure in allied result as they are opposed in direction. Whatever (for instance) I have urged in economy has ten times the force when it is remembered to have been pleaded for by a man loving the splendor, and advising the luxury of ages which overlaid their towers with gold, and their walls with ivory. No man, oftener than I, has had cast in his teeth the favorite adage of the insolent and the feeble—"ne sutor." But it has always been forgotten by the speakers that, although the proverb might on some occasions be wisely spoken by an artist to a cobbler, it could never be wisely spoken by a cobbler to an artist.

J. RUSKIN.

AMIENS, *St. Crispin's Day*, 1880.

NOTE.—In the second and third columns the bracketed words and figures are more or

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